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Table of Contents Motto: Et mibi res, non me rebus subiungere conor. (Horace) Foreword I am a soldier.

I view the world from my soldier’s perspective.

Deliberately one-sided.

A soldier knows no compromises.

Thus, all my actions must also be viewed from this perspective. “Eternal peace is a dream, and not even a beautiful one,” says Moltke; it kills all the forces of will and action.

War, however, awakens and fosters the nation’s finest strengths.

Over time, it is an internal and external necessity for a people who wish to survive and prevail in this world.

For the soldier, it is a fountain of youth, hope, and fulfillment all at once.

The best among them should be the leaders of the people.

The man who defends his fatherland with his own body, who risks his life for the honor and greatness of his people, has the first claim to the leadership of the state.

The victory of the shirkers, deserters, and profiteers of November 1918—still called a revolution—inevitably led me into the realm of politics, if I were to follow my soldierly instincts.

Even in my political activities, I was and remained a soldier.

The goal of my politics is to fight for the German front-line soldier to receive his rightful share in the leadership of the state and to ensure that the ideal and real spirit of front-line soldiering is also upheld in politics.

One of my friends, a young, brave front-line officer, once uttered the classic statement: “I realize that I no longer belong to this people.

I can only remember having once belonged to the German army.” Nothing illustrates more starkly than these words the shocking fact that the front-line soldier finds no home in this state, for whose existence two million of his comrades have given their lives.

The “gratitude of the fatherland,” which he fought for, was denied him; “the right that is born with us—unfortunately, that is never even a question.”

I want to subjugate things to myself, not submit myself to things.

Defenseless and without rights, the front-line soldier stands today in the German province of the League of Nations; in the coming Reich of revived German strength, he shall be respected and privileged, and what he is entitled to shall be recognized.

According to the concepts of politics today, I was a “bad” politician.

The soldier does not find crooked paths; even if he tries, he cannot find them.

Whether, of course, “bad politics” is not, in the end, the better kind, I leave open.

The time in which we live today, where a world has crashed and broken apart and a new world is fighting for life and light, will be called by future generations the birth of a new era.

The birth pangs that today shake not only our fatherland but the entire globe will provide researchers of later days with the key to the world’s new epoch.

So I, too, will presume to contribute, for my part, a small sketch and excerpt to the picture of our times that the fermenting young Germany presents today.

Not “sine ira et studio,” but “cum ira et studio,” with anger and zeal, I intend to write.

I do not wish to appear “objective,” for I am not and cannot be.

In my defense, I rely solely on the idleness forced upon me and on the fact that I belong to those “immature, reckless, and irresponsible” elements who, strangely enough, are even allowed to remain temporarily free in the republic that Dr.

Levi protects, are temporarily left at liberty.

I do not wish to merely describe things and events in their development and outcome.

Rather, my aim is to portray the people whose work has shaped these events in their actions.

Men make history; people shape the world.

In doing so, I can joyfully fulfill a duty of gratitude: to erect a monument to the men who were my leaders, advisors, and comrades, one that extends beyond our brief era, presenting them to contemporaries and descendants as models and examples.

I cannot yet say everything I have to say.

The veil must remain drawn over some things; it may be reserved for a later time to lift it as well.

To remove it today would not serve the Fatherland. “Take everything in its entirety!” Whether and to what extent Germany, and to what extent Europe, will play a role in the world in the coming era—and what that role will be—who can predict it?

It is, however, necessary that we men of the present generation never forget our reverence and respect for the past greatness of proud imperial Germany and carry in our hearts and proclaim our faith in the coming Greater Germanic nation. 10 Introduction The craft of soldiering can be learned; soldiering is in the blood.

From my childhood onward, I had only one thought and desire: to become a soldier.

My childhood friends had to play soldiers with me; in the wide meadows that bordered my father's house in Munich, we fought our battles in the open air.

I spent my free time at the Mar-Il-saferne or on the Neit≠ squares and was well-liked among the soldiers.

I was wounded for the first time back then.

In the barracks courtyard, I had found a pipe that I pulled on for a long time until—much to my parents' horror—it ignited with a violent bang, filling the entire room with smoke and shredding the palm of my hand.

I hadn't actually inherited any military genes from my family.

My uncle, however, did.

Siegmund Röhm, later district commissioner in Neuhausen, had fought with such distinction as a soldier on the front lines during the 1870–71 campaign that he was permitted to attend the emperor's proclamation in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles.

He took a liking to me because of my military heritage and often told me many stories about war and soldiering.

My father, however, had not been a soldier.

Almost all of my ancestors served as civil servants in royal or princely service.

The earliest ancestor we have been able to identify, Thomas Röhm, lived around 1600 as a councilman in Hirschberg an der Saale.

My father was hard on himself, upright, and frugal.

In his younger years, he had traveled extensively and shaped his own life.

He was a royal civil servant of the old school.

Out of deepest conviction, he had joined the Nationalist Movement even in his old age.

My mother is the best wife and mother in the world.

As her youngest son, who loves her above all else, I can say no more.

My brother, who, like my father, turned to the railroad service, served, like me, four years in the field and became an officer at the end of the war.

My sister moved to Austria after her marriage to Adolf Lippert, who later became Federal Forest and Estate Director—but we have always remained inseparable siblings.

My father granted me a great deal of freedom, gave my inclinations free rein, and left me to my own devices when he saw that I performed better without encouragement.

For nine long years I attended the Royal

Maximilian Humanistic Gymnasium; my performance was quite inconsistent; I was never a particularly good student.

I look back with gratitude and joy on many of my teachers, especially the noble church councilor Hans Mezger and the kind and just mathematics teacher, Baron von Stengel, whose student I was in all nine grades.

Professors Dr.

Littig, Dr.

Kronseder, Dr.

Diel, and Dr.

Melber were chivalrous teachers who understood young people and knew how to seek out and win their minds and hearts.

The full professor of the 7th

grade, who wrote in my final evaluation: “His conduct repeatedly gave cause for reprimand due to a tendency toward disorder and restlessness.” Despite this warning, however, this tendency has persisted to this very day!

The final exam, which marked the end of my high school years, made no impression on me whatsoever.

I passed it with good results without any particular difficulty.

After a few short days of unbridled freedom, I was allowed to don the king’s robe.

I.

In the Service of the King 1.

Ingolstadt.

On July 23,

July 1906, I became a soldier.

The dream of my youth came true.

I joined the Royal

Bavarian 10th

Infantry Regiment “Prince Ludwig,” later King, in Ingolstadt.

At that time, the city on the Danube was entirely a military town.

The soldier meant everything.

I soon grew quite fond of dear “Schanz” with its old houses and cobblestone streets, the many churches, and beautiful gates.

We were well received and held in high regard in the restaurants everywhere.

Above all, Mr. and Mrs. Kiening at the “Ludwig” café looked after us like the children of a large family.

The units were usually strictly separated here.

We, the 10th Regiment, known as the “Glorious Ones,” naturally considered ourselves the most distinguished regiment in the garrison.

First, because our regiment, founded in 1682, was the oldest Bavarian regiment, and second, because it was named after the Bavarian heir to the throne and later king.

The Thirteenth, called the “Apostolic,” because the Holy Roman Emperor and Apostolic King of Hungary was their regimental patron, we naturally did not recognize as our equals.

We maintained a good friendship with the Pioneers, the “intelligentsia unit” from Ingolstadt, while we felt far superior to the gentlemen of the Foot Artillery, despite the high opinion they held of their own unit.

The non-commissioned officers and enlisted men also had their own “paroles,” in which a strict esprit de corps prevailed.

This pride in their unit and regiment—which was often ridiculed by people who could not relate to the life of a soldier—was certainly one of the sources of strength for the Old Army.

After all, in peacetime it spurred the units on to exceptional achievements.

It proved itself no less in the field.

Just two weeks ago I was still in school; now I stood in the barracks courtyard.

We flag bearers were put through our paces from the very beginning.

Often, after finishing our duty, we staggered back to the barracks room, completely exhausted.

Once, during gymnastics, we all fainted and could only recover slowly in the infirmary.

As “ordinary soldiers,” 13 of us were housed in the barracks, had to tidy our beds and rooms ourselves, and learned to scrub and clean like any other soldier.

This was very beneficial for our future as soldiers; at the time, however, it gave us little joy.

From time to time, some superior would honor us with a visit during duty to impart good lessons, which we would gladly have done without; for the training sergeant usually concluded from this that he should engage with us even more thoroughly and affectionately.

In addition to my company commander, the company sergeant major in particular took charge of my training in internal duties with a devotion that, in my view at the time, would have been more fitting for a nobler cause.

With unshakable perseverance, he used to appear in the room a few minutes after reveille, less with the intention of wishing me good morning than to make sure I had jumped out of bed immediately, and to scrutinize my washing and dressing.

After a few weeks, to achieve our final goals and gain military knowledge, we were assigned to Lieutenant Heinzmann, who knew how to make the training—especially the instruction—engaging and educational.

During the war, this outstanding officer kept every promise he had made in peacetime.

The few weeks at the training camp passed quickly.

The clumsy, pale-faced civilians had soon become young, fresh soldiers.

Then the regiment was transferred to Landau an der Dar, where exercises took place in larger formations; from there we went to the maneuvering grounds.

The long marches were very exhausting for us at first.

I envied my schoolmate Dolf Braun, who was a cadet in the 7th

Chevauleger Regiment, whenever he trotted proudly past me.

And there was no denying that God in heaven and the King had dressed the cavalrymen far more handsomely than us poor foot soldiers.

The regiment’s officers took great care of us.

Back then, we absorbed the great lesson that made the officer corps strong: the difference between “duty” and “off-duty.”

On duty, there is no friendship and no mercy, only comrades.

After the maneuvers, a rigorous winter training began in the company, partly with the “old crew” and partly already as assistant instructors with the recruits.

Like every other man, we had to stand guard and spent many a night on lonely watch.

The non-commissioned officers' drills and later the ensign's drill were the highlights of this military training.

When the other ensigns entered the War College, a case of stiff neck broke out in my battalion; so, due to the risk of infection, I was not allowed to leave the barracks for 14 days.

Only after this test of patience was I discharged to the War College with best wishes. 2.

War College.

The welcome in the vast building on Blutenburgstraße in Munich was not exactly friendly.

At first, of course, it disrupted the routine that an ensign arrived late, after the good teachings had already been imparted to all the cadets.

That in itself was already against the house rules.

And we were soon to learn, thoroughly, that order reigned here.

At first, given the ensign's rank in the regiment, we were still under the delusion that we were gentlemen.

We were cured of this false notion by the supervising officers of the military academy within a few days.

We soon learned to recognize that we were "nobody at all," that we could do nothing, and that we were to be made into soldiers and human beings only here.

The fancy uniforms went to the tailor; a short stand-up collar, cut strictly according to regulations and measured by the supervising officer with a ruler, was now permitted to adorn only the ensign's baton.

At 5 o'clock in the morning, the unfriendly, shrill ringing of the bell sounded; a second later, the drill sergeant was usually already standing in some room, and woe betide any ensign still lingering in his bed!

The slightest offense was punished with an iron fist; every duty was demanded of the ensign to perfection.

And it was for the best, even if it often hurt.

The principle that an officer must have personally experienced what he would later demand of his men and must do everything better than his subordinates was placed at the forefront of the training.

And I often looked back gratefully on the lessons of my military school days.

When, on Saturday afternoons, while the rest of humanity indulged in sweet idleness, we marched in turn at a march and in step with rifles at the ready from the parade ground to Oberwiefenfeld, until we

could barely feel our arms anymore, the familiar command would almost always come at the infantry barracks, at the spot where the pavement was particularly hard: “Machine gun fire from the right flank!” As if struck by lightning, we had to throw ourselves onto the hard stones and then storm forward in small groups through the endangered area.

And if this did not meet the strict standards of our leader’s eye, the enemy machine gun would open fire again and again until our conduct finally met with his approval.

Among the instructors, I particularly remember the tactics instructor, Captain Ganzer.

He had quite a few quirks that we cadets found amusing, and he loved classical sayings.

For example,

B., when he disagreed with an ensign’s tactical explanations, say something like this: “There are few fortunate people who, without thinking at all, always do the right thing.

Most of the time, one does the wrong thing.” Such clear statements naturally defused even the most defiant outbursts from us ensigns.

Moreover, we all equally revered the teacher who, with unwavering consistency, instilled in us the fundamentals of military science, and we admired above all his unyielding sense of justice.

He treated everyone equally, whether of high nobility or humble origins, whether they served in a privileged regiment or belonged to a provincial line regiment.

I felt no pure affection for the commanders who “educated” me at the military academy.

They always found something to complain about.

Rarely did they succeed in...

VB.

On the street, to pay their respects in a manner that met their expectations.

If this was not the case, then every “privilege” was revoked until further notice, i.e.

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In the evening, there was no leave, no special permission, and instead, work hours were scheduled.

The handling of matters of honor at the military academy was organized simply and clearly.

I had a dispute with Ensign Barth of the Engineers and felt the need to bring the matter before the Honor Council of the Military Academy.

The verdict was brief.

Both ensigns received three days' confinement and were then required to reconcile.

We not only reconciled formally, but also became good friends and both openly acknowledged the exemplary manner in which matters of honor were handled.

I could have later warmly recommended this approach for some rather unnecessary honor disputes; unfortunately, it did not always find acceptance or imitation beyond the walls of the Military Academy.

The camaraderie among the cadets at the military academy was very strong.

Of the many comrades, I would like to single out our senior cadet, who fulfilled his demanding duties in an exemplary manner.

In Comrade Häfner, who had emerged from the cadet corps, I had a particularly skilled instructor in gymnastics and fencing.

In terms of physical agility, the former cadets were far ahead of us, the conscripts!

The old service regulations contained the following fine words regarding the replacement of officers: The officer corps is supplemented: 1.

From cadets, 2.

From educated young people!!

How we used to tease each other about that!

But not only in physical training, but also in general military virtues, especially in camaraderie, the cadets had a head start over the rest of us, which we first had to catch up on.

The rigorous training at the War College culminated in the final examination, practical field exercises, a field trip to the battlefields of 1870, and a marksmanship course.

The final evaluation, with which I was discharged to the troops, was not exactly the best.

I had clearly not been diligent and hardworking enough! Opinions on exam results and evaluations will always differ between examiners and examinees.

Nevertheless: the War College was over, and I returned to the regiment.

During the welcome ceremony, the regimental and battalion commanders made it clear to me how necessary it was to properly train me within the regiment in order to perhaps still make me a decent soldier.

I was therefore assigned to the strictest company commander, Captain Petz, of the 10th Company, who received special instructions regarding my improvement.

He, too, greeted me with the pleasant assurance that he would devote his energy to furthering my education.

Well, that could turn out well!

But despite all that: I had attained the rank of officer, and my appointment as second lieutenant had been solemnly announced in the daily order.

And on the eve of March 12,

March 1908, a dozen newly commissioned officers, including myself, presented themselves to the astonished people of Ingolstadt at the grand tattoo. 3.

Lieutenant.

Now the world was my oyster!

On March 12

March, the usual garrison parade took place on the occasion of the birthday of His Royal

Highness, Prince Regent Luitpold, followed by a banquet at the officers' mess.

Here I was now accepted as an officer into the circle of comrades with whom I had spent so many happy years in glorious times of peace and proud times of war.

In the cozy rooms of the Kavalierspreti, we have time and again, over the years, recovered from the work of duty and many a hardship.

And the regimental castellan Hüssner, just like his successor Glas, were as closely connected to the entire officer corps as our father Schott, the regiment's distinguished chief bandmaster, who so often played for us on festive occasions.

We had all taken him to our hearts, he who, over four decades, had seen generations of officers and soldiers come and go in the regiment.

He detested the "kitsch and nonsense"—as he called the new operetta hits—from the bottom of his soul and simply refused to play them, no matter how much we begged.

But when he conducted Wagner, the hall fell silent; he captivated everyone with his masterful baton.

When he finally struck up "Prinz Eugen," our regiment's parade march, he swept everyone along in a wave of overwhelming enthusiasm.

Then his good friend Hüssner had to bring him a fresh mug of Monzinger to cool him down.

Even in the military, joyful celebrations are followed by difficult weeks.

Captain Petz took me under his wing with great fervor.

His reputation was well-deserved.

Deep down, he was a kind-hearted man, but on the surface he liked to act gruff at times and could also be quite quick-tempered.

I actually liked him very much; when he treated me fairly and well, he could have anything from me.

But as soon as he tried to exert his authority over me, I rebelled.

This often made the relationship between us quite tense.

Because I believed I was in the right, I tried one complaint after another; but since the regimental and battalion commanders were actually the cause of my harsher treatment, I had little success.

Finally, I felt that my head was on the line.

This Sturm und Drang period had one advantage for me and for my entire military career: I had to perform my duties with the utmost precision and become so thoroughly familiar with all service regulations that I became unassailable in this regard.

It was precisely this that I drew upon in later years in *Roym, The Story of a High Traitor* 17.

One more thing, which was even more important: I experienced firsthand the harsh and perhaps unjust treatment, could gauge how it gripped the soldier’s heart, and resolved to treat my subordinates differently.

In my old notes, I found a slip of paper from my early years as a first lieutenant with the heading: “Guiding Principles for My Future Service.” I will include them here without any additions or corrections, because they best characterize my attitude and mindset at the time: 1.

Even if a superior is very intelligent, that does not mean he is always the wiser one. 2.

One should not judge anyone without having heard them out. 3.

You cannot take off your boots without first taking off your shoes, not even in the military.

Qualification trumps judgment; everyone must, however, form their own opinion, and do so entirely on their own. 5.

There is a difference between an officer and a man.

One should therefore not apply the same standard to both, under any circumstances.

One should always bear in mind that the subordinate also judges the superior.

Often, this qualification, which judges the officer and the man, is the more accurate one.

In times of prolonged peace, many all too easily forget to secure the respect and affection of their subordinates.

That is the higher ideal, not the praise of the superior.

The drive to achieve something is necessary; it must not, however, corrupt one's character, and this must be examined time and again.

U.

One must also exercise moderation in simplicity, otherwise it becomes complicated.

One should value substance over form; therefore, one must necessarily know and master form.

Z It is dangerous when the subordinate gets the feeling that merely the time spent is the yardstick for satisfactory performance, 12.

The thinking subordinate is the natural enemy of the superior.

These twelve guiding principles, which Ib wrote down for me as a young lieutenant, certainly contain no earth-shattering insights; but I have often made good use of them later on.

Everything in the world comes to an end.

My company commander was promoted to major and assigned to headquarters, the battalion commander was transferred; a new regimental commander took the reins of the regiment.

I also rose through the ranks and, over time, became a bit more settled.

Captain Hans Schesser, a bold and dashing officer, became commander of the 10th

Company was Captain Hans Schesser, a firm and dashing officer with whom I soon got along quite well.

He turned the company into an excellent drill unit that made a name for itself in the regiment. At the head of his company, which loved him, he fell at Serres on September 6,

September 1914.

I humorously recall the criticism from superiors when he first presented the newly taken-over company: the battalion commander found almost nothing good to say about him; pretty much everything was wrong.

The regimental commander wasn't quite sure whether he should praise or reprimand him.

So he hedged his bets and expressed the opinion that there was still much room for improvement.

The brigade commander praised the company and had only a few reservations.

To the division commander, Lieutenant General von Martini—whom we have since always called the patron of our company—the company was already "very good," while it finally made an "excellent" impression on the commanding general, Baron von der Tann.

Thus, the various superiors had rated us from “completely inadequate” to “excellent.”

But since, as is the case everywhere and especially in the military, the superior trumps the subordinate, my boss and I were able to receive the partly heartfelt, partly somewhat envious congratulations of dear comrades.

The training of the recruits, which was my responsibility for four years, gave me great joy.

Actually, it was the most rewarding and gratifying duty of all: to turn these young lads, mostly from the countryside, who arrived clumsy and uncouth, into soldiers and useful members of society.

When the recruits were presented at the beginning of the year, I was proud to hear words of praise and recognition for the work I had done from the regimental commander or a higher-ranking superior.

Of course, the great task also fully absorbed the young officer, whose heart was entirely in the work.

Mistakes made in the training of the recruits could never have been made up for.

The young recruit officer had to resolve the question—crucial for the people and the fatherland—of whether an enthusiastic, indifferent, or often already embittered civilian would become a soldier for life.

And—with few exceptions—he solved them admirably.

Company, battalion, and regimental drills, as well as maneuvers, filled the rest of the year.

Then the lieutenant would disappear back into the ranks and stand, like any other man, in formation alongside his platoon.

After the fall exercises, the veteran soldiers, who had served faithfully for two years, returned home to make way for the younger generation.

No profession can be as noble as that of the officer, who guides people to become fully human, to whom fate entrusts the responsibility for young hearts and human lives.

A distinctive feature of Ingolstadt was the extensive garrison guard duty.

The Ingolstadt fortress was protected by two belts of forts that stretched in a wide arc around the city, connected by military roads.

All these forts and the numerous powder magazines were guarded day and night by sentries under the command of a precautionary fortress command, each provided by a battalion from the garrison.

At night, the inspection of the sentries was entrusted to the officers on patrol.

When, at midnight, at the head of the guard parade, the lieutenant marched through the city behind the blaring music with his sword drawn, he did not allow himself to be deterred by an inconspicuous sentry who ordered him, at around 12 o’clock at night in the biting cold, to inspect the guard and the sentries

at Fort X, two hours' distance away.

The military band, which, after the guard's march, played lively tunes on the Government Square, drowned out all troubling thoughts.

Apart from brief assignments to the shooting range and the rifle factory, I spent almost all my time with the troops until the war.

With particular pride and a distinct fondness, I took on the training of the non-commissioned officer cadets every year, the

H.

those soldiers of the battalion who, in their second year of service, were to be employed as non-commissioned officers or drill instructors—in other words, the best of their class.

My battalion commander, Major Göller—who, like Major Petz, had risen through the ranks in the regiment—was happy to leave this task to me.

To all officers, he was a fair superior and a good comrade.

Among the regimental commanders, two names stand out prominently alongside Colonel Weiß, who fell at the head of the regiment in September 1914: Colonel von Kirschbaum and Colonel Kiefhaber.

Colonel von Kirschbaum was a born nobleman, the epitome of an officer.

It was in this very spirit that he trained the entire officer corps.

Always well-dressed himself, he also made sure that his officers paid attention to their appearance.

Some may not consider this particularly important.

But the subordinate has a keen sense of this and demands it from his leader.

We lieutenants had to get as wet and dirty as the men in battle, but that was not to be taken to heart.

Special rights simply entail special duties!

In the line of duty, the colonel was relentless; the regiment trembled before the small, proud man whenever he appeared on the barracks yard.

Yet officers and soldiers revered him and were in the deepest mourning when he unexpectedly succumbed to a brief, severe illness.

Colonel Kiefhaber was cut from the same cloth; at that time, just like Weiß and von Kirschbaum, he was a bachelor.

Professional soldiers should generally be bachelors; then they are independent and free in their decisions and not tied to home and family.

His day began early: while we lieutenants were still asleep, he was already on horseback, riding into the morning; quite early, the commander would then appear from somewhere among the troops, rarely to the delight of the company commander, for whom a later visit—if one had to be made at all—would have been more welcome.

He always treated the company commander with particular affection.

We lieutenants, whom he bothered only a little, noted this with schadenfreude.

His special care was also directed toward internal affairs, where he thoroughly remedied many irregularities and abuses.

Exemplary was his concern for the kitchen and mess hall operations of the troops, which the rank-and-file soldier felt abundantly in his own flesh.

He understood the soldier's trade from A to Z.

It was a joy for the young officer to experience, under his leadership, regimental exercises and maneuvers that were always lively and varied.

He showed no shyness toward his superiors; he was a natural leader through and through.

Just as we young officers admired him in service, so did he win our hearts completely off duty.

He had empathy and understanding for the hardships, worries, and reckless acts of the young officer.

Wherever he could help, he helped personally.

Once, he spontaneously paid off the debt out of his own pocket for a lieutenant who, through good-heartedness and recklessness, had gotten himself into a foolish financial mess. He couldn't stand "boring guys."

He loved the fresh, young, and fun-loving officer.

He was completely one of us young men at banquets and festive meals.

There he sat right in the middle of us, feasting like the youngest of the bunch.

Then, once again the strict regimental commander, he took particular pleasure in inspecting the young lieutenant a few hours later during morning roll call.

Long after his promotion and transfer, the entire regiment bore the mark of his fine character.

During the war, this exemplary officer received Bavaria's highest decoration for bravery as a division commander—and not merely for his skillful leadership from the command post.

His Excellency von Kiefhaber was at home on the front lines as a division commander and personally led patrols as far as the enemy trenches.

One cannot speak of Colonel Kiefhaber without mentioning his fine regimental adjutant, Lieutenant Hörauf.

Lieutenant Hörauf was one of those rare individuals who combined intelligence, wisdom, superior knowledge, and skill with the finest character and sincere camaraderie.

He was the regimental adjutant as he should be.

He was later transferred from the regiment to the War Academy and from there to the General Staff.

The adjutant of an infantry regiment was a minor god; the young lieutenants regarded him with awe and admired his position of power.

Next to him, only the battalion adjutants held a slightly higher rank.

In the 1st

Battalion, First Lieutenant Högerl was the adjutant during my time there.

He had long since outgrown foot duty; in the higher spheres of various office duties, he patiently awaited his promotion to captain.

He was later succeeded by Reiske, whom Providence had endowed with all the gifts of a diligent adjutant.

To vividly demonstrate to us, the clueless lieutenant officers, the workload of a battalion adjutant that he had to manage, he used to regularly arrive late for the communal lunch table.

He also managed the regiment's beautiful and well-stocked library, for whose reorganization he rendered great service.

Organizing and stamping was a little passion of his. 21 Everything was stamped, but the fine stamp: "Not to be stamped"—we lieutenants often laughed until we cried.

In the 2nd

Battalion, the high-spirited Lieutenant Bauer was succeeded by the lively Lieutenant Sonntag, whom we had all taken to our hearts.

The adjutant of the 2nd

Battalion was First Lieutenant Liebing, a truly magnificent man and comrade.

Usually reserved, he could occasionally let loose and then surpass his astonished comrades with biting wit and humorous pranks.

Out in the field, he did his duty without saying much or making a fuss, just as was his fine way in peace as in war.

Together with Treßel and Kiehl, he was the heart and soul of our tennis club, to which I look back with joy. I would like to pay special tribute here to my unforgettable comrade Obo Kellermann, because for me he is the very embodiment of the concept of “Ossi.”

Having emerged from the cadet corps, he was excellently trained as a soldier, fresh and agile in service.

The hearts of all his men belonged to him.

He was the most loyal and best friend one could find.

That this Ossi officer proved himself a fine man in the field needs no further words; on a patrol mission he undertook despite his commander’s objections, a fatal bullet struck him.

It almost seems to me that the Lord of Hosts called him to Himself to spare him the shame of the war’s end.

Would he have fought by my side even after the war?

I believe so.

Alongside the upright Captain Vogt and my comrade-in-arms, I would like to express my gratitude to my good friend Lieutenant Fischer, who took care of me in his proverbial manner.

No. 8 For the social education of the young officer, the garrison provided a field of experience and activity.

The command of the officers’ society fell to the commander of the } As such, Lieutenant General Baron Reichlin von M re earned the special esteem of all through the refined, distinguished character he imparted to all events, as well as the gratitude of all. I often had the privilege of being invited as a guest to his home.

After the war, in which the general took full part,

This noble officer, shaken by the turn of events in his homeland and grief-stricken by the death of his wife, took his leave of the world and, as a devout Catholic, entered a monastery.

In the city of Ingolstadt, there was plenty of entertainment for us lieutenants throughout the year.

In the summer, our master of ceremonies held fine, exquisite concerts; in the winter, we took an active part in the house balls and the redoutes.

Of course, we had to save diligently; for the salary was meager and the allowance from home was scarce.

No officer in the regiment actually received more than 20–40 marks in monthly allowance from home.

Some had to manage entirely without an allowance. 22 But it was manageable, since the food in the officers’ mess was cheap, plentiful, and well-prepared.

Pride and joy reigned in the regiment when our Most High Regimental Commander, His Royal

Highness Prince Ludwig, the future Regent and King, honored us with a visit.

Regiment commander since 1867, the Prince was deeply and wholeheartedly devoted to his regiment and demonstrated his interest and favor toward it on every occasion.

The High Patron knew almost all the officers and officials, as well as the senior non-commissioned officers, by name.

I, too, had the honor on several occasions of being invited to the Royal Table in Munich along with other officers.

The atmosphere there was simple and cordial.

The last King of Bavaria was often criticized for his simple and unpretentious manner, and was probably also credited with only a limited military acumen.

That is not correct.

Ludwig II, who as a young prince was wounded in 1866 while serving as an orderly officer at Helmstädt, knew the soldier's trade quite well.

As in all things, he had a keen eye for the essentials here as well and did not allow himself to be blinded by appearances.

In his straightforward manner, he certainly did not hold back with his criticism when something did not please him.

Later historians will have to acknowledge that this prince, whom his government and inner circle so shamefully abandoned in November 1918, was indeed one of the most astute and far-sighted minds of pre-war Germany.

We officers considered it a special honor to always attend the court ball held at the Royal

Residence.

I, too, was thus able to attend as a guest on three occasions.

The years 1912 and 1913 were of particular significance for the regiment.

On December 12,

December 1912, His Royal

Highness the Prince Regent had died at an advanced age; our regiment's patron initially assumed the government of his fine country as Prince Regent.

A few months later, he ascended the throne as King Ludwig II.

The regiment initially bore the designation “Prince Regent Ludwig” and was then, by order of the king, named the 10th.

The regiment initially bore the designation “Prince Regent Ludwig” and was then, by order of the King, named: 10th

Infantry Regiment King.

As a special honor, the regiment was granted the signature of its royal patron, which we henceforth bore with pride.

A company of the regiment was ordered to Munich for the coronation celebrations, to which I was also assigned.

The officers were invited to the royal banquet.

For the commemorative ceremony in front of Wittelsbach Castle, our regiment provided the 10th

company under the command of Captain Schesser as an honor guard.

Standing with me in the front row were First Lieutenants Heller and von Wachter and Second Lieutenant Roth, as His Majesty the Commander-in-Chief passed by.

One of my most glorious memories from before the war is the centennial celebration at the Hall of Liberation near Kelheim in 1913.

In addition to His Majesty the Emperor, all the German sovereigns took part.

Here I had the honor of standing in the honor guard at Kelheim Station 23.

After all the princes to whom the regiment had paid its respects had arrived, the regiment finally entered the station.

Our distinguished regimental commander proudly led the Emperor along the front of the honor guard and gave him a detailed report on our regiment.

Every soldier’s muscles tensed; the proud troop stood like a wall before their supreme commander. I felt special, as I was holding the company in formation.

Every man took home with him the conviction that the Emperor had looked him—and him alone—in the eye.

After inspecting the front, I was permitted to lead the company—before which all the flags of the Bavarian units had been presented—through the ranks of troops forming a guard of honor, who presented arms in tribute, out to the Hall of Liberation. 5 On the steps of this monument, the most overwhelming sight of pre-1914 Germany unfolded later, as the procession of the German princes left the Hall of Liberation.

Who could have guessed back then that this first and greatest gathering of all German princes would also be the last?

Starting in 1913, I was periodically assigned to battalion and regimental headquarters for training as an adjutant, as I had been assigned to serve as adjutant of the 1/10th in the event of mobilization.

In the winter of 1913–14, I was tasked with preparing the mobilization schedules for the regiment and its reserve and replacement units.

The new mobilization plan for the Royal

Bavarian

Army came into effect on April 1, 1914.

In 1914, I was proud to receive reports from the individual formations that the regiment had organized, stating that everything had gone excellently—and so I, for my modest part, also contributed to the army's 1914 mobilization proceeding so exemplarily and smoothly. I was spending my summer vacation in 1914 in Herrsching am A.

Oe, when the shots were fired at Gerajevo.

With the daily news reports, which increasingly pointed to the looming threat of war.

Finally, it no longer kept me so far from my post: 5 as re 5 ei and rüdie at the regiment, where I checked the mobilization calendar once again carefully.

mobilization calendar once again.

Two days later, a state of war was declared.

According to mobilization regulations, the regiment was "ready to march ahead of schedule" and had to be dispatched as early as the first day of mobilization.

day of mobilization.

In the "state of imminent danger of war," only the officers and enlisted men of the regiment were required to achieve combat readiness; the reserve troops were not yet brought up to wartime strength.

The regiments rushed to bring their ranks up to war strength: the deployment of the Nuss forced the Emperor to order the mobilization of the army on August 1.

August. This order was greeted with jubilation not only by us officers, but also by the battle-hungry soldiers.

The entire nation breathed a sigh of relief after the tension of the past weeks.

With joyful pride, Germany entered the greatest battle of its history. 4.

Into the field — First battle.

On the first day of mobilization, at 9:01 p.m., the 1st

Battalion of the Royal 10th

Infantry Regiment König, of which I was the adjutant, left Ingolstadt as the first unit with 20 officers, 546 non-commissioned officers and enlisted men, 40 horses, and the necessary vehicles in 30 railway cars.

Via Ansbach—Heilbronn—Germersheim—Saarbrücken—Metz, the journey continued to Remilly, where we arrived the following evening punctually and on schedule at 10:05 p.m.

and immediately took over border and railway security in the Remilly sector from the Royal

Prussian

Infantry Regiment 173 took over.

Throughout the entire journey, we were greeted with cheers by the local people at the train stations and showered with gifts.

We were happy to be the first to face the enemy; for we thought that all the men who had to remain behind at the garrison to train the reinforcements would surely arrive too late.

His Majesty the King sent the following message on August 3:

the following message: I sincerely thank my regiment, of which I have been the commander for nearly half a century, for the loyal farewell greetings.

I wish my regiment, the Max Emanuel Life Regiment, luck and blessings for the upcoming campaign.

May victories in battle enhance the ancient glory of this regiment, which ranks among the four oldest regiments of My Army, for the good and blessing of the Fatherland!

Ludwig.

Every soldier, from the oldest officer to the youngest man, vowed to put the words of his Royal Commander into action.

We were, after all, called the “Glorious Ones” and wanted to prove ourselves worthy of this honorary name in the field.

We did so—God knows.

Nor did the military successes that the Supreme Commander wished for his regiment fail to materialize.

His Royal

Highness Crown Prince Rupprecht issued a daily order to the 6th Army under his command on the day he assumed supreme command,

in which the following sentences are worth noting: “Just as in the glorious days of 1870–71, the tribes of Germany have once again rallied in loyalty against a sacrilegious attack.

Every German man knows what is at stake.

We must honor the legacy of our fathers.

We are determined to defend the legacy of unity and greatness of the Reich that we have inherited, our beloved German land, to the last drop of blood.” So now it was war!

At first, we weren’t quite sure how to behave.

From our maneuvers, we were used to everything being makeshift and uncomfortable.

The 1/10 staff therefore set up a fancy command post in a barn on the outskirts of the village of Anserweiler, even though we were in our own country, there was plenty of accommodation in the village, and the enemy was far away.

Why keep it simple when it can be complicated!

My commander, Major Krüger, lay obediently in the straw on the right flank at night, then I, followed by the battalion drummer, the clerks, and the orderlies, on the left, strictly in order of seniority.

Major Krüger was a magnificent man who was devoted to his profession and did everything for his soldiers.

In his enthusiasm, he had offered to address all the officers, including the youngest, with the informal “you.”

This reflected a fine sense of camaraderie that was always and everywhere evident, but in this form could hardly be called proper.

As an adjutant, I had an easy time of it in the first few weeks: a commander who left the adjutant to his own devices, four peacetime company commanders, and the officers and men of August 1914.

Captain Beichhold, an officer who was perhaps often too conscientious but personally dashing, led the First Company; Captain x AH, energetic, led the Second; Captain Heinzmann led the Third; and Captain Höger led the Fourth Company.

Unfortunately, the latter had to return home after only a few weeks on doctor’s orders due to a serious illness.

I know and saw how difficult the farewell was for him at the time; I often missed him very much later on.

The work in border guard duty was not exactly grueling; we simply had to wait until the armies behind us had completed their march.

We envied the cavalry patrols, which were allowed to advance into enemy territory over our forward outposts; the first young cavalry lieutenant who, because of a dashing patrol, was awarded the E.

K.

II for a dashing patrol, we regarded as a demigod.

Decisive battles had already begun on the northwestern theater of war; on the front near Nan cp, where we were deployed, events unfolded only slowly.

We heard little of what was happening far from us; one day we handed over border guard duties to Bavarian Nefer hunters and marched on.

We did not learn what our destination was or for what purpose.

When we crossed the French border posts for the first time, a cheer went through our ranks.

But day after day passed, and we had still not seen a single Frenchman face to face.

It made a deep impression on us when we marched past the first bodies, brave Chevaulegers who, while on patrol, had apparently been shot down from an ambush.

It was not until August 20

did we hear the heavy thunder of cannon fire and the clamour of battle, the rattling of our machine guns, and the peculiar cries of the French.

Eager for action, we advanced closer and closer; but then the regiment halted again, the roar of battle faded ahead and gradually subsided more and more.

The battle was over; our regiment had not been deployed.

We had to limit ourselves to providing detachments for guarding and escorting prisoners.

So at least we saw the first enemy officers and soldiers, who marched past us in long columns as prisoners.

Once again, long and exhausting marches followed, day and night, which took a heavy toll on the troops.

Especially on the night of December 24–25,

August, dense columns of all kinds pressed forward on narrow roads.

From time to time a brief halt, then we moved on again.

Convoys stopped on the roads, batteries trotted forward; it truly looked as if things were getting serious this time.

The supply situation had recently broken down; no bread had been issued to the troops for days.

So the mood was tense, and the exhausting night march, which kept stalling, gave plenty of cause for cursing and scolding.

When, during another stop, a group of cavalrymen obstructed the march, I shouted at them angrily.

It was then that I learned that the division commander, His Excellency von Höhn, was doing us the honor of accompanying us with his staff, and I took this opportunity to vent my displeasure over the inadequate rations. “Keep quiet about these trivial matters now; tomorrow we go into battle,” was the curt reply.

All hunger and discontent vanished with those words.

At last, these exhausting marches back and forth were to come to an end!

And finally, we could prove in the heat of battle what we had learned in peacetime.

As we rested in the morning to take our rations, joy and enthusiasm for battle reigned throughout the regiment.

The company commanders addressed the men and emphasized above all that, as the King’s Regiment, we wanted to pay special honor to our Royal Commander on his name day.

In every company, enthusiastic cheers were raised for His Majesty the King.

Everywhere, the final preparations were being made and everything was being checked once more.

The general atmosphere of high spirits was disturbed for only a moment by a lieutenant in the reserve of my battalion, who had been complaining to me ever since our departure that his heart could not withstand the strain.

When he came to me again with his complaints just before we marched off to battle, I took him, furious, to the regimental commander, Colonel Weiß, who dismissed him with contempt and sent him home.

Singing, the columns of the Royal Grenadiers marched into battle.

Suddenly, heavy and heaviest shells crashed down in the midst of the regiment’s ranks.

We were on the French artillery firing range, where the French knew every distance and no hiding place could escape them.

Toward Maire-Erepvic and Flainval, the columns were spread out and, despite the heaviest losses, advanced unstoppably like on a drill ground toward an unknown enemy whom we did not see, but who incessantly showered us with the heaviest fire.

Only gradually did we realize that heavy fortress and field guns from the Dom-Basle area were firing at us.

We deployed and advanced as the military academy had taught us.

Whatever was still alive, we attacked.

At the head of our 2nd

Company, Captain Erhard was seriously wounded, along with many of his men; the senior officer of the company took command and charged forward.

I gallop alongside my commander, rushing forward past the companies, shouting their direction and objective to them.

Soon an enemy machine gun has us in its sights; by the skin of our teeth we manage to evade the well-aimed pursuit.

Behind a forest clearing stands Captain Beichbold of the 1st Company in his shirt sleeves, raising his rifle high and rallying his company behind him.

Soon he, too, falls back, wounded.

I am told to look for the regimental commander somewhere and gallop across the field.

Everywhere, heavy-caliber shells strike, gouging holes in the ground as tall as houses.

In between lie the dead; the wounded whimper quietly.

After a long, fruitless search, I ride back and can no longer find my battalion commander.

The companies have broken up into swarms of riflemen, advancing here and there toward the enemy.

Why ride aimlessly back and forth now, when the troops urgently need a leader?

Without hesitation, I leap from my horse and send it back with my faithful groom, who has stayed close to me.

I myself take command of a platoon in the line of fire before me and rush forward with it.

We approach the village, from whose hedges unseen machine guns and riflemen fire incessantly into our ranks!

The capture of Flain-val is our objective.

Leaders and soldiers fall and sink back, wounded; the ranks are increasingly thinned out during the charges.

I take command of a company, then, as all the other leaders have also fallen, of the entire unit attacking here.

There are no officers left; most of them, standing in the front line, have collapsed.

Suddenly I receive a sharp blow to the head; I touch my forehead to see if I'm bleeding and pull my helmet down: an infantry shell has torn off part of my helmet at the temple and the cockade, and lightly grazed my forehead.

But undaunted, we press forward: jump up, march, march!

We must finally succeed in at least driving back the enemy!

But no matter how intently I peer through my binoculars into the enemy's hedges, there is nothing to be seen or recognized.

The enemy's projectiles come from impenetrable cover.

Overwhelming infantry, machine gun, and artillery fire keeps us pinned down.

Our own infantry fire grows weaker and weaker.

When it becomes completely quiet along the vast, elongated defensive line and the enemy fire also subsides, I jump to my feet and call out to my comrades to get up.

I want to see how many are still fit for battle.

The bugler, who has remained like a shadow at my side, says wistfully to me: "Lieutenant, there's no one left!" And indeed, no one is standing up along the entire front line.

Only three men have survived unscathed; all the rest are dead or wounded.

No sounds of lamentation are heard: heroes lie and rest here; far and wide, no more of our fine troops are to be seen.

We stand alone in the open field, a few hundred meters from the enemy, whose well-aimed fire from behind hedges and walls is soon growing stronger again.

Where have we ended up, and where are the other battalions and companies?

In the heat of battle, we had paid no heed to anything else.

I had to make a decision; advancing any further would have been madness.

Only a soldier can fathom how I struggled with myself.

Finally, I decided to crawl back with the few comrades who had survived.

I was certain that my commander would have me shot by a court-martial for retreating, and I told this

to my comrades.

Nevertheless, I still believed that, as a final act, I might be able to bring back a report on the course of the battle and request help for the many wounded.

The five of us crawled back slowly, step by step, including two wounded men, one of whose knapsacks I was carrying.

Soon the enemy realized what we were up to and opened a well-aimed volley of fire at us.

We had to leave two more comrades behind; after hours, exhausted and nearly parched, I stopped with two men in an alley lined with mirabelle plum trees.

Like savages, we pounced on the refreshing fruit and quenched our burning thirst.

We were out of range of the enemy infantry fire and walked along the avenue into a village, where I encountered many lightly wounded and scattered soldiers, whom I gathered together.

By nightfall, I had gathered a strong company around me and captured a scattered field kitchen.

There was no sign of the regiment and nothing to be found; as I heard, it was to be regrouped somewhere in the area.

I spent the night and the entire next day searching.

The commander of the 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Brigade, Major General von Kirchbaum, to whom I reported, could only give me a general direction.

Finally, on the night of the second day, I found my battalion and was welcomed like a prodigal son.

The reinforcement of nearly 300 men—who, however, were drawn from all the companies of the regiment, from the 10th Reserve Infantry Regiment, which had been fighting near us, and from other units—I had simply enlisted every straggler I met into my company—was received with the greatest joy.

But there was little time for greetings: the French attempted a night raid on us.

With shouts and shoves, we had to rouse the exhausted soldiers who had been overcome by sleep.

But we succeeded: the French were repelled with heavy losses.

At the same time, not far from us, my friend, Captain Fischer, victoriously and heroically repelled a French incursion.

My assumption that I would be summarily executed did not come true; I was only scolded by my

commander for not having returned to him. 29 i The regiment had suffered the heaviest losses, particularly among officers.

The fierce and reckless bravery with which all the men of the regiment had charged forward had exacted its heavy toll.

But the baptism of fire had been passed with flying colors; to the many proud days of honor of the regiment, which had also made such heavy sacrifices in the War of 1870–71, a new day of glory had been added.

When, a few days later, my commander recommended me for the E.

K.

II for my brave conduct in battle, the brigade commander, Major General Baron von Tautphoeus, returned the request with the remark: “The proposal cannot be supported; Lieutenant Nöhm belongs to his commander as an adjutant.” 5.

Serres.

Difficult days followed this battle.

Not far from the battlefield of August 25.

The regiment exhausted itself over the next two weeks in death-defying assaults near Serres.

Often two or three times a day, the rifle lines advanced across the open terrain, only to be withdrawn again.

The higher command wanted to force decisive victories.

The fighting continued day and night, with attack after attack during the day and ambushes and hand-to-hand combat at night; a ceaseless advance and retreat.

On top of that, it rained so hard that at night we shivered from the cold in our soaked clothes.

Just when we thought, after retreating to the village, that we could dry our clothes and get some rest, an alarm order would surely come immediately, ordering us to advance again.

The village of Gellenoncourt was the focal point of our battalion’s fighting; some nights the French spent there, some nights we did.

We were supported by the Royal

Bavarian 3rd

Field Artillery Regiment, in particular by the detachment of Major von Clingensperg assigned to our sector.

This brave officer and his equally dashing adjutant, Lieutenant Speck, were truly the kind of artillery officers the infantry could have wished for.

Time and again, when the going got tough and the need was greatest, Speck was there to ask and see how and where the artillery could help.

And help came when we needed it.

This lieutenant truly earned the Royal

Military Order of Max Joseph, this lieutenant truly earned at the head of an artillery platoon.

Often, in the grueling and demoralizing battles that raged day and night without cease, the nerves of officers and men threatened to fail, and it took the most relentless energy of the lower ranks to fight against it.

There was only one ray of hope: the French artillery fire, which had been superior and uninterrupted during the day, ceased at night.

It ceased around 7 p.m. and did not resume until around 7 a.m.

Thus, during this period, the field kitchens could be brought forward; we were able to feed ourselves.

In addition, the night was used to dig out shelters that offered at least a little protection.

We suffered terrible losses during those days: our heroic regimental commander fell during the assault.

I can still see him today, rushing ahead to the front line with his staff.

We had dug small holes in the ground to at least have some cover while lying down.

I asked the colonel to lie down and take cover as well; but he refused.

So my comrades and I also jumped up from the ground and stood upright in the line, defying the enemy fire.

A platoon of the battalion, which had just made a leap forward, lost its bearings somewhat—I rushed ahead to lead it back into the correct formation; when I returned, an infantry bullet had struck down our beloved commander.

My esteemed captain also fell, along with many other comrades from the 10th

Company, from which I had emerged.

My classmate, Lieutenant Rösch, the adjutant of 11/10, followed the adjutant of 11/10, Lieutenant Ningler, in death.

Many other faithful comrades—I shall never see them again.

From August 25

August to 10

September, we were in continuous combat.

The heaviest days of fighting were August 25

August, the 5th, 7th

and September 9

September.

The regiment had lost 80 percent of its officers and 70 percent of its men.

By September 10,

September, there were still about 8 active officers in the regiment.

My battalion had a captain as battalion commander (Major Krüger commanded the regiment), a lieutenant as adjutant, reserve officers, and sergeants as company commanders.

About 700 men remained of the entire regiment.

Just how terrible these battles were is perhaps also evident from the fact that the brigade commander, Major General Lang—a leader deeply imbued with a sense of responsibility for the welfare of his subordinates—suffered a nervous breakdown due to the heavy losses, from which he was unable to recover during the war. 6.

From Metz to Spada.

Still in the first half of September, the corps was withdrawn from the front lines and marched to the Metz area for rest and reorganization.

We now knew what war was.

Since our arrival in the staging area, we had not taken our uniforms off.

September 15

September was our first day of rest in the field.

We heard little and sporadically from the outside world, only that great victories had been won on the northwestern theater of war.

We were certain that we, too, would now be allowed to move to that front. 31 The first mail also reached us now.

Countless care packages were eagerly received.

Above all, it was time to change our underwear and uniforms and give ourselves a thorough cleaning.

Much had changed in our outward appearance.

My beautiful, new, gleaming adjutant’s sash had undergone many transformations.

First I had to cut off the long tassels, then I turned it inside out so it wouldn’t sparkle in the sun, then I wrapped it in gray cloth, and finally I took it off entirely.

In its place came a narrow armband.

The epaulets no longer glittered either.

Everything that had been ostentatious was and remained gone.

Instead, many a buttonhole, including mine, was adorned with a simple black-and-white ribbon, which was our greatest pride back then.

Who could have guessed at that time how much it would later be devalued?

On September 17,

September 1914, reinforcements arrived; among them, for the battalion, three very young, vibrant 17-year-old cadets, all of whom fell on the field of honor.

Before long, we were once again a battle-ready regiment.

Lieutenant Colonel Mieg took command of the regiment, a tall, imposing figure who towered over the entire regiment.

We were soon to learn that he was also superior to all of us in bravery.

He was strict and demanded the utmost from his subordinates, but he was even more ruthless toward himself.

Whenever something significant occurred during an attack or a positional battle, it wasn’t long before the regimental commander was on the front lines.

I do not know what I admired more in this rare leader: his strict sense of justice or his outstanding bravery.

The days of rest and recuperation passed quickly.

We set out again, but our longing for Northern France went unfulfilled.

The regiment joined the ranks of the II.

Bavarian

Army Corps as part of Strantz's Army Detachment toward the Côtes-de-Lorraine.

There was heavy fighting again, but this time we kept advancing steadily.

Hadonville and Hattonchatel were captured.

This was followed by bloody skirmishes in the woods.

I recall one particularly difficult day: We, the 1st

Battalion, had advanced, fighting our way through the Chandt Forest, and as night fell, we stood surrounded by the French, locked in a fierce struggle.

Wherever we advanced, we were met with unceasing fire; even from the trees, bullets rained down on us.

Our advance into the forest resulted in the heaviest losses.

First Lieutenant Neidl, who had just arrived from home with a reinforcement transport, fell at the head of his company.

The losses, especially among the officers, were extraordinary.

I therefore suggested to my commander that we spend the night occupying a cross-clearing through which all communication routes led, with our front facing both forward and backward.

We were to stay as close together as possible to be able to withstand ambushes, 33 and, with bayonets fixed, repel any attempt by the enemy to attack us from the front or rear.

Once the deployment had been completed in this manner, I went on patrol with a few men through the forest to the rear to report to the regimental commander.

I met him at the rear edge of the forest, where heavy artillery was just taking up position.

The regimental commander, acting on an order from Lieutenant General von Höhn, ordered the battalion to immediately move the companies and field guards to the edge of the forest on the side.

Pointing out our precarious situation, I explained that carrying out this order was impractical.

The companies and field guards, I explained, would be attacked and wiped out one by one.

However, if we maintained our current position, we could fulfill our task of providing cover for the departing heavy artillery more safely and effectively.

But Lieutenant Colonel Mieg insisted on carrying out the division's order.

I crept forward through the forest with my men and soon rejoined my battalion unmolested.

Major Krüger, as well as the company commanders who had been summoned, agreed with my assessment that splitting up the battalion would lead to its destruction, whereas the division's combat mission would be fully accomplished in the current position.

I made the difficult journey back to the regimental commander and declared that I would rather be shot than lend my hand to carrying out the order.

The regimental commander raged at the insolence and disobedience and wanted to lead the companies to their assigned positions himself.

It did not come to that, as a new order arrived in the meantime, according to which the entire regiment was to be led through the forest and out of the forest toward Spada and, still that night, positioned on the heights near Spada.

As if by a stroke, all fatigue and discontent vanished.

On the morning of September 24,

September 1914, at the appointed hour, the battalion stood shoulder to shoulder with the other battalions and the 13th

Infantry Regiment and launched the attack. 7.

Wounded and back into the field.

At first, we advanced well.

Soon, however, we realized that we were facing a vastly superior enemy, who was also receiving support from heavy fortress guns positioned in rear fortifications.

I was standing with my commander in the front line of fire; the battalion was to remain here for a while.

Since I was quite tired from the past days and nights, and the adjutant usually doesn't get a chance to rest, I decided to take a short nap.

My commander couldn't understand how anyone could sleep under enemy fire, but I considered the opportunity to rest favorable.

As is well known, the art of sleeping in the field is a science of its own.

A soldier must learn to sleep at any time, in any place, and in any situation.

Anyone who does not master this science is of limited use in war.

As I drifted off to sleep, my last thought was: The French have been shooting for so long, something is bound to happen.

Despite the infernal noise, I slept soundly.

Then I suddenly received a heavy blow to the face, so that my helmet rolled off and I staggered to the ground.

When I felt my bleeding head, it turned out that a bullet fragment had apparently torn off the upper part of my nose.

A deep wound gaped in my face; blood gushed incessantly from beneath my eyes.

It wasn’t long before I felt faint.

Then my splendid comrade Joseph Gößl, who had always been brave and loyal at my side, took charge of me, pulled me back a bit, bandaged me up as best he could, and dragged me backward with the help of a lightly wounded man.

My commander gave the order to take me immediately to the dressing station.

I said goodbye to him and all my dear comrades, with whom I had spent ten difficult days, with great reluctance.

The regimental commander received my report on the way back; his initial anger had dissipated in light of my severe wound, which, as he later told me, had made a particularly gruesome impression.

He shook my hand in farewell and had my orderly take me back.

At the field hospital, I was met by my battalion’s doctor, Senior Physician Dr.

Federschmidt, and applied the first bandage.

I was happy to be in his care.

I had grown fond of him as a person and a comrade ever since we had marched out together; I knew there was no better or more conscientious doctor.

When he answered in the affirmative to my question of whether I could retain my eyesight and be cured, I lay down on my bed reassured and let everything else come to me without worry.

Today I know that it is not least thanks to his high medical skill that this serious wound left me with no lasting consequences.

War and combat were now over for me for the time being; it did not look as though I would be restored to health anytime soon. Now I had time to reflect on what this war, which I had longed for so long, had actually been like.

Had what we were taught in peacetime proven itself on the battlefield?

In the eight years that I had now been a soldier, had I learned what I needed in war?

I believe I can answer this question with an unqualified yes.

Our peacetime training was excellent; our regulations were superb.

But the decisive factor was that military school had instilled a warrior spirit and had made us willing to fight.

The will to attack, which had been instilled in the soldiers time and again, had shone through. One of our troop leaders once remarked, in reference to the bloody officer losses in September 1914, “They must learn to die!” In my opinion, such a warning was unnecessary; the officers knew how to die.

In fact, there was perhaps too much of a good thing here at the beginning of the war.

Our infantry was quite excellent in the attack; perhaps they—officers and men alike—should have been held back a bit to spare excessive casualties.

I put many of my thoughts in writing back then in September 1914 in the trenches; for I always used to note down what pained me or displeased me, so that I might bear it in mind when I myself had to issue orders.

Many an angry or spiteful note that I jotted down back then as a front-line soldier in the trenches proved very useful to me later as a General Staff officer.

I knew how much it meant to the commander and the man in the front-line trench when the commander or an officer from the higher staff sought him out during his lonely watch and asked about the troops’ wishes; I understood when the front-line officer wanted to vent his frustration about orders from “behind.” “Unconditional obedience is certainly good, but a reconsideration of armchair orders by the front-line officer is often necessary,” I wrote in 3 B.

On September 19,

September.

Next to it on the note was written: “A divisional order: ‘I hold the regimental commander responsible for reaching a specific position’—I consider this rather ill-advised.” I was thus later never tempted to propose such an order to my divisional commander.

I also tried to note down other observations of a general nature.

For example,

A.: “Our infantry must learn more about engineering duties in peacetime, but at night; digging in during the day is child’s play.” “The training of new officers, including junior officers and non-commissioned officers, must be more extensive; independence should be fostered much more.” “There’s no need to bother too much with war-like drills in peacetime; the enemy will soon enough ensure we have enough troops for peacetime.” My enthusiasm for war, however, had suffered no loss whatsoever due to things I hadn’t liked.

I was far too much of a soldier not to know that once a soldier had nothing left to complain about,

things would never be quite right “with the commissar.”

Some doctors made sour faces in the weeks that followed.

From Metz, I went at my own request to the district hospital in Kaiserslautern, where my good friend and dance partner from Ingolstadt, Miss Elfe Schleußner, faithfully and comradely cared for me as a nurse.

An excellent surgeon, Dr.

Kienscherss, took me under his care.

Thanks to his fine, masterful skill, my recovery progressed rapidly despite recurring erysipelas.

Thanks to a brilliantly successful operation, I received a replacement for the nose I had lost in the battle and, once the danger was finally over, was transferred to the military hospital in Bad Reichenhall.

Here I slowly learned to breathe properly again and recovered quickly.

By April, having been promoted to first lieutenant in the meantime, I was declared fit and transferred to the reserve battalion.

Since I had no desire to earn military laurels in the reserve unit, I requested to return to my beloved regiment in the field.

In an official report dated April 29, 1916, Lieutenant Colonel Mieg later reported the following to the brigade: “From letters written by First Lieutenant Nöhm in January and February 1915, it became clear that he wished to return to his regiment at the front as soon as possible.

The severity of the wounds required repeated follow-up operations.” On April 17, 1915, I was able to report back to my esteemed battalion commander, to whom I had recently been assigned as an adjutant.

The battalion commander received me very warmly.

He was quite pleased to see me again so soon; on September 24,

When I said goodbye, he had not expected to see me in the field again.

Most of my older friends from the J.

Most of my older friends from the battalion were still there.

The regiment was still stationed more or less in the same place where I had left it as a wounded man.

The attack had not advanced any further; fierce counterattacks had been repelled.

Germans and French now faced each other in fortified positions.

Spada was still in our hands; a German field guard was stationed at the Relaincourt Mill, where I had

received my first medical treatment.

To our left, the A.

The 13th

Infantry Regiment, just as ours was positioned at the edge of the forest.

A rather simple shelter in the Chanot Forest served as the battalion's temporary quarters and as a place where I was to share with them for the next 105 days.

In general, the situation was, at least for the moment, quite calm and pleasant.

My friend Odo Kellermann, who had already distinguished himself in August 1914 by capturing one major, several captains, and 250 men, and who was now engaged in heavy fighting with his regiment, always referred to our position in his letters as a "militia position," which I could not really dispute in all seriousness.

My commander, however, would have flatly denied this fact.

He was the one who had to keep watch at the most dangerous point of the entire Western Front.

So he used to lie down on the cot in the evenings, fully armed and booted, and was very indignant when, already on the first night, I calmly undressed in the evening.

He scolded and railed against my reckless carelessness, but in the following days decided to at least take off his boots and unstrap his pistol.

Only a few weeks had passed when the regimental commander summoned me and entrusted me with the command of the 10th

Company, which had suffered heavily in fierce fighting in the Aillwald, with the task of turning the severely shaken unit back into a good company.

With joy and pride, I assumed this honorable post on June 2, 1915. 8.

Commander of the 10th

Company.

The year I led the company was the finest of my life.

There can be no more rewarding task than to be the leader of a company in wartime.

Fate weaves a close bond around this military family; one feels closely connected to the other, and joy and sorrow are shared by all.

Only the commander bears full responsibility for every member of the unit.

That is beautiful and glorious.

Of course, the leader must first earn the trust of his men.

But once he has it, all hearts belong to him.

Then he also knows that he can rely on every single one of them.

Everyone follows him, even into death.

Not that a higher-ranking leader bears less responsibility for his followers; it is the direct relationship between the leader and the soldier, the close, unbreakable bond, that elevates the profession of the company commander so far above all others, giving it the special character of true soldierly camaraderie.

My first impression when I took command of the company was not exactly pleasant.

Before me stood the almost typical picture of a battle-weary, exhausted, and somewhat disgruntled unit.

Neither the older nor the younger non-commissioned officers—the company no longer had any commissioned officers—stood out noticeably from this overall picture.

All the more rewarding, then, did my task seem to me.

I vowed to prove myself worthy of my regimental commander’s trust and to make this company the best in the regiment.

I take pride in the fact that I succeeded in doing so within a few months and that the company earned recognition throughout the regiment as the “Guard Company of the King’s Regiment.”

I thank all the magnificent non-commissioned officers and enlisted men who stood with me on the front lines back then.

Above all, I must remember my dear Sergeant Michael Weber here.

I had known him since cadet school as a brave and capable soldier and was truly delighted to find him here again.

He carried out all orders conscientiously; he was receptive to all my suggestions: in him I had an absolutely reliable, loyal, and conscientious colleague who soon also enjoyed the trust of every single man in the company.

The sergeant’s duties were thus in the best of hands.

The company spent two days at rest, two days on standby, and two days in position.

The relative calm at the front allowed me to conduct internal duties, the discipline, and training of the company almost as if we were at peace.

In the barracks in the rear as well as in the shelters during standby and in the position, strict order and cleanliness had to prevail; clothing and equipment were inspected and replenished during regularly recurring roll calls. 37 I placed great importance on always giving the officer and men sufficient time for complete rest.

Nothing is more detrimental to the morale and alertness of a unit than depriving them of the necessary rest or disturbing them.

Whoever is on guard duty in the field also watches over the others and forfeits his good standing if he does not stand guard as required; but whoever is off duty should rest and must not be disturbed. 5 My main focus was on the food supply.

Quartermasters and cooks are among the most important figures in wartime.

Since the meals were inspected daily either by me or by one of the platoon leaders, and in the case of over 5.

complaints about insufficient or poor food, I

A significant part of the rest period was devoted to health care, in particular personal hygiene and foot care.

You cannot wage war with sick and foot-sore infantrymen.

Correspondence with home had to be monitored in accordance with orders.

The necessity and appropriateness of this arrangement have been hotly disputed.

Unfortunately, the fighting usually took place elsewhere.

In the rear, a Frenchwoman knew better when to attack than the German front-line soldier ready for the assault.

And in any case, it is not pleasant for the soldier when every word he writes home is read beforehand by his superior.

I tried to extract the good from this measure: I took it upon myself to review the letters in order to learn about the joys and sorrows of my men.

My soldiers knew this, and gradually, as I gained their trust, they no longer imposed any restrictions on themselves.

The particularly clever ones then also used this method to slip me something they didn’t want to tell me in person, 3.

e.g., that they now urgently needed leave to visit their girlfriend, and

etc.

Reviewing the letters gave me the opportunity to learn about my men’s wishes; I was then able to fulfill some of them.

I was also informed about the general mood and gained insight into family circumstances.

Armed with such knowledge, I was then able to speak to individuals man-to-man and, here and there, lend them a helping hand in word and deed.

Nothing fosters the trust of the soldier in his leader more than when he feels and knows that his superior does not see his task as merely using him as an instrument of war, but that he also cares about his personal well-being and misfortunes, his worries, and family matters.

The soldier is grateful when his leader treats him like an older comrade—someone who cares deeply for him.

The Hates of the Uhezeit, d.

H.

The entire day was devoted to military training.

Here I took the position that, since I was required to perform drill exercises in peacetime, I had to achieve perfection based on the conviction that a good instructor also holds his own in combat.

Then I first had to train officers, since I had none at the time of the 38th intake.

In a relatively short time, 7 officers emerged from my company.

The best and most loyal of them, who accompanied me in various capacities until the end of the war and then during the unrest at home, was Robert Bergmann, a head teacher from Altdorf, a man through and through.

He was intelligent and energetic, knew his way around the trade, and fought with bravery and valor in battle.

He knew how to handle people and cared for them like a father.

The young student Lederer had to go through a tough school of discipline under me.

Only after overcoming many difficult experiences did his path lead him to becoming a true officer.

But he became one, and then conducted himself bravely and honorably.

Another dashing fellow was Second Lieutenant Schneider; you could put him anywhere and be sure he’d hold his own.

The young Lieutenant Fuchs was every bit as dashing as his comrades, and Deputy Officer Bernhard also performed quite well on patrol duty.

From a fundamental order I issued to my officers on October 21, 1915, I would like to highlight a few sentences here that I established as guidelines for the general conduct of officers: 1.

It would be a misjudgment of the conditions of war if an officer were to claim for himself, in both professional and social respects, freedoms that are denied him in peacetime.

War is the crowning achievement of the school of peace.

Now the officer can and must show that he is worthy of the privileges granted to him by service regulations and social esteem.

In addition to the rights that he may and must claim by virtue of his rank, the officer must above all be mindful of consolidating and maintaining the good reputation and prestige of his rank among the army and the people through exemplary and conscientious fulfillment of his duties. 2.

It is not his rank that makes the officer, but his superior knowledge and skill.

The officer must be able to perform and direct the tasks he demands of his subordinates.

Where war has elevated the officer to a position of leadership at an early stage, it is his duty to continually supplement and expand his knowledge and skills. 3.

It is the officer’s privilege to fulfill his duty with particular conscientiousness in independent action—unsupervised by superiors.

He must always act in such a way that he stands in good standing in the judgment of his subordinates.

The latter must never be allowed to gain the impression that a task is performed or that zeal is shown solely to please the eyes of the superior. 4.

The officer must always know how to separate duty from private life.

Friendship or friendly accommodation must not be exploited to allow oneself the slightest relaxation in personal conduct or in the execution of given orders while on duty. 5.

Pp. 14.

In his character, the officer must be free and upright; insincerity is unworthy of an officer.

Through sincerity and honesty, he will earn and maintain the trust of his superiors, comrades, and subordinates.

One must be able to rely on the officer’s word in every case. 1 Exaggeration and boasting do not belong to the officer’s toolkit. 39 The officer greets his superiors militarily, in the form of a salute.

Good military tact is particularly evident in Helen une Ice Er. 6.

However, every officer must be able to accept reprimands from subordinates in a dignified manner.

Iz f sr sub Knaur 8 0 The officer does not wait to tell his comrades anything detrimental in the presence of superiors.

Not in a manner unbecoming of an officer.

At gatherings and parties — = one should, either personally or through older comrades, take steps to remedy the situation.

The official complaint to the commander remains the last resort.

He must also acknowledge the mistakes he has made.

If he receives a reprimand or censure, the matter is settled.

This is unmanly and unworthy of an officer.

Whether on duty, on leave, or on any occasion where you come into contact with members of other branches of the military or civilian personnel, an officer must conduct himself with dignity and always bear in mind that he is judged not only as an individual but as a representative of his rank and, in particular, of his regiment.

Justified pride in the regiment to which he has the honor of belonging demands, on every occasion, a demeanor befitting a well-bred person and a true gentleman. In passing on these principles here, I wish to emphasize that I have always attached particular importance to the personal conduct of the officer.

I also believe I have achieved good results in doing so. The officer corps must be the first class in a military state. It was the first in feudal Germany and has—on the whole—lived up to its lofty task.

The press, the champions of a realm of beauty, dignity, and meaningless equality, has always complained that the officer corps is predominantly drawn from the highest social circles, particularly the nobility.

The soldier at the front, however, had no such complaints.

For he was able to make the experience—though incomprehensible to the common people—that these officers were usually much closer to his own feelings than those who had come from his own circles.

While the latter often strive to secure a distance from their subordinates through arrogance, authority comes naturally to those called to lead by birth and upbringing.

The nobility, too, fulfilled its duty and obligations to the fullest during the war; in and after the revolution, however, the majority of them—no less than the bourgeoisie—unfortunately relinquished their leadership position without a fight.

Whether it will ever regain it with its own bearers, I do not see; to do so, it would have to stand today in the front line of the people’s battlefront.

I cannot possibly list all of my brave non-commissioned officers and enlisted men who are worthy of lasting remembrance.

Memories are linked to almost every one of them at some point during the shifting battles; some risked and sacrificed their lives in daring patrol advances; many others fell or were wounded in the bloody battles before Verdun.

It was a particular pleasure for me to present the Medal of Bravery to the proven non-commissioned officer Hans Wachter before the assembled company.

Sergeant Näbel, who had served with the 10th Company during his time as a recruit, also distinguished himself on several occasions.

Company, Sergeant Mayr, Corporals Fischer, Rieger, Binder, Schmidt, Spangler, Bachhuber, and Privates Mossner and Biber distinguished themselves on patrols.

In other assignments, Corporal Häßler distinguished himself particularly through his courage and composure, Corporal Heerwarth, a steadfast and energetic officer; the dignified Private Hörner, who was a pillar of the company's internal operations; Private Branz, a messenger who never failed; and Privates Kittler and Hofmeier, who, assigned to the regimental staff, brought honor to their company.

May these few randomly chosen names serve as a memorial to all the brave men who, in service to King and Fatherland, fulfilled their duty selflessly, joyfully, and bravely.

Just how enduring the bond was that our shared war experiences had forged around us was demonstrated in September 1927,

September 1927, when the old comrades-in-arms of the 10th

Company shook hands again in Feuchtwangen after twelve years.

I was bound by warm camaraderie with the other company commanders of the battalion.

Lieutenant Müller, the commander of the 9th

Company, was a strapping, self-assured soldier who had his fine company firmly under control.

With Second Lieutenant Bergen, the commander of the 11th

Company, "His Majesty's finest lieutenant," I undertook many missions together.

As the war progressed, he distinguished himself particularly within the regiment as a company and battalion commander.

After him, Reserve Lieutenant Grein led the 11th

Company for a long time, a man of integrity and a capable, brave officer.

I was most fond of Lieutenant Bauer, who was the commander of the 9th

Company for a long time.

Even in peacetime, when I was his superior as an instructor for the cadets, I had come to appreciate this exceptionally gifted young man.

In the field, since our two companies were usually stationed together at rest, on standby, and in position, we became closely bonded.

Our friendship extended to our companies, which, like us, stood together loyally.

As fate would have it, on a dark night, returning from the sector commander, I sought him out in the company commander's dugout and suggested that we relieve our forward posts.

As so often, we walked together to the edge of the forest and parted ways at the boundary between our companies.

Immediately afterward, a shell whistled past my ears.

It had pierced my comrade's heart.

We laid him to rest in a field grave in the Königsmulde in the Chanot Forest.

It was probably the only time in the field that I shed bitter tears.

The 2nd

Battalion had a truly magnificent commander.

Major Schaaf was truly a fatherly friend to his men; officers and enlisted men alike were devoted to him.

Always with a glass in his hand, he was just as much at home in the front lines as he was in the rear positions 41 and Befeblitellen.

He had distinguished himself particularly in the heavy fighting in the Ailly Forest.

As commander of the border guard, he later demonstrated, during the darkest days of Bavarian history, how a royal officer remains loyal to his sovereign.

For this, he was honored to receive the king's personal thanks and a handshake.

A few weeks after I took command of the company, its military discipline had improved to such an extent that it was a pleasure to work with it.

In particular, I was keen to elevate and consolidate the position of the non-commissioned officers.

Non-commissioned officers must command the same respect and obedience as senior officers.

The order of a non-commissioned officer on duty is no less valid than that of an officer.

On the contrary, I would have punished violations against non-commissioned officers more severely than those against senior officers.

One cannot demand greater duties and higher responsibility from anyone without simultaneously granting them greater rights.

The fact that non-commissioned officers were treated the same as the men in the field seriously jeopardized the internal structure of the unit.

The intermediary between the officer, who changed frequently, and the rank-and-file was lost; the officer, who did not know how to assert himself, faced a united front of non-commissioned officers and enlisted men.

During the “Revolution,” this bitterness took its toll.

People were astonished to see the non-commissioned officers often siding with the rank-and-file in the conflict of interests between officers and men.

And yet, it could not really have been any other way.

In 1915, I had one of my oldest and best junior non-commissioned officers draft a “Memorandum on the Improvement of Conditions for Active Junior Non-Commissioned Officers,” in which the wishes and concerns of these men were expressed.

It aimed primarily at an improvement in rank, i.e.,

H.

elevating their status and respect, and subsequently at economic support to ensure a sufficient livelihood for them and their families.

In my opinion, usefulness and bravery in the field must ultimately decide everything in war.

If a non-commissioned officer distinguishes himself through outstanding bravery and is capable of leading a unit, then he should be able to become an officer.

These men do not disrupt the unity of the officer corps.

A promotion after the war or upon discharge benefits neither the army nor the non-commissioned officer.

The appointment of retired active non-commissioned officers as sergeant lieutenants instead of lieutenants was arguably one of the most unsatisfactory measures, which hopefully will not be repeated in the future.

Over time, the front line and the rear positions were developed into a sort of fortress through the construction of concrete shelters and protective trenches, the supervision of which was entrusted to Reserve Lieutenant Lienhard, who had been awarded the Medal of Bravery.

The enemy trenches were about a kilometer away.

My priority was to control the forward area and dictate the terms of engagement to the enemy.

This was achieved through a systematically organized patrol service.

A paper mill opposite the company's position was the main target of our advances.

Lieutenant Schneider, my most successful patrol leader, received "full recognition for his outstanding performance" in the brigade's daily order on October 17, 1915, and in the corps' daily order on January 13, 1916.

Weeks and months passed in this way.

In Chaillon, at our rest quarters, Master Schott—who, despite his age, insisted on being with his regiment in the field—and Chief Bandmaster Kohn took turns conducting the regimental band of the 13th

Most of the musicians had distinguished themselves as stretcher-bearers in the heavy losses of the autumn battles of 1914.

Most of the musicians had distinguished themselves as stretcher-bearers in the costly battles of the fall of 1914.

Senior Bandmaster Kohn, equally likable as a musician and as a soldier, often visited me in my company's trench. 9.

Verdun.

In the spring of 1916, the thunder of cannon fire echoed from Verdun to our positions.

There was increasing activity at the front; rumors circulated of imminent relief and transport to decisive battles.

The König Regiment was in excellent shape.

The companies were fully manned, well-trained, battle-hardened, and ready for action.

At the helm was a commander in whom even the rank-and-file infantryman placed unconditional trust.

One day, after a short train ride, little rest, and a silent march, the regiment was assembled in the Romagne area to advance to the assault starting positions alongside the Infantry Leib Regiment.

Major Trautmann, the General Staff Officer of the 1st

Division, announced the situation and mission to the assembled company commanders of the regiment in a concise and clear manner: the König Regiment was tasked with storming the fortified stronghold of Thiaumont.

Following this, the regimental commander and the battalion commanders assigned their tasks to the company commanders.

The 10th Company

Battalion, the 10th

and 11th

companies were designated as the forward assault force.

Once again, we officers of the regiment were able to gather briefly and shake hands.

We were to speak to many dear comrades from the long peacetime for the very last time!

On the march to our position, I once again, with barely suppressed emotion, inspected my company's parade march and looked into the eyes of all those dear people.

They knew that now was the time to demonstrate what they had learned over the years.

Enthusiastic yet serious, we marched out; we felt and knew that the task set before us was difficult and could not be accomplished without bloodshed.

That night, we relieved the weakened remnants of the Royal

Bavarian 1st

Infantry Regiment "König" in the front line.

We remained in our positions throughout the day and made the final preparations for the assault, which was scheduled for the morning of June 23, 1916.

Our artillery had meanwhile opened fire on the enemy with unprecedented intensity, which increased hour by hour and eventually grew into a storm.

At exactly 8 o'clock in the morning, a wall rose from the German trenches and advanced relentlessly.

The enemy shouted at the time about the regiment's assault: "An officer who took part in the recent battles at Verdun, assures us that no one is capable of imagining the individual scenes as the German army advanced in deep formations, while the most terrible hailstorm the world has ever known poured ceaseless torrents of lead upon the combatants." (Political report from Aris.

Hervs declared "that Verdun is more threatened than ever by the Germans' Tiger Leap."

Reports from the front in Geneva state that "the fury of the German attack on Friday exceeded all human imagination."

Intransigeant writes: "Our soldiers, with fury in their hearts, must yield to a brutal force that is even more crushing than our superhuman resilience." 115 The Royal

Bavarian. 10.

Infantry Regiment König on June 23

June The impetuous advance and the enemy's fluctuating resistance had torn my company apart; parts of other companies pushed their way in between.

At my side remained constantly my brave Lieutenant Bergmann, the bold and resolute non-commissioned officer Häß≠ ler, and my equally daring and loyal lad Gö ß J.

The brave non-commissioned officer Wachter had unfortunately been wounded immediately after leaving the trench.

His loss was particularly painful because he had been assigned as a signal pistol shooter.

A small group, consisting of my companions, remained constantly by my side.

The assault on the company advanced as quickly as possible, under fierce enemy resistance, albeit with significant losses.

The enemy, who offered fierce resistance in some places, was destroyed with hand grenades or otherwise neutralized; the majority were taken prisoner and sent to the rear.

There was a delay for the 10th

and 11th

Company, the next units of which I had also taken under my command.

Groups from the 10th

Company took part in the assault on the fortification; with the larger part, I bypassed the fortification and captured the surrounding trenches and entrenchments.

In the process, men from the 10th

and 11th

companies, but there was neither time nor manpower available to recover them.

South of the Thiaumont fortification, I then paused briefly to reorganize the units as much as possible, gathered the elements of the II.

and made contact and exchanged messages with Captain Lehr, the commander of 1/10, whose battalion was linked up on the left.

At a crossroads, I briefly met First Lieutenant Liebing, who greeted me warmly.

I had already been reported dead by the regiment; all the more heartily we shook hands.

After a few minutes, I resumed the assault.

I now decided to attack and clear out the J-works, which stretched from the Thiaumont work in a southerly direction toward the Kalte Erde (Froide-Terre) work and were still completely intact, since heavy fire from these works, which lay on the flank of the assault, was still inflicting heavy losses on us.

All of the 1st-line works fell into our hands, though again at the cost of many bloody casualties.

The southernmost fort put up particularly fierce resistance.

My unit had been reduced to Reserve Lieutenant Bergmann and about 12–15 men.

At first, there was no connection to the right or left, as we had apparently advanced too quickly at this point.

The garrison of the completely undamaged I-fort consisted of officers and 65 men and refused to surrender.

So we surrounded the concrete fort and brought the French out one by one, immediately tearing the gas masks from their faces and then sending them back.

Thus, the evacuation of this last small stronghold was also successful.

The commanding French captain came out at my call to surrender.

Just then, the German barrage reached the fort to destroy it.

In the smoke of the fire and the haze of the gas, communication with the artillery in the rear was impossible.

The Frenchmen who had just been captured were rolling in their own blood.

Immediately afterward, a shell struck in the immediate vicinity.

Although I felt a violent blow to my chest, I initially paid no heed to the impact and continued to clear the fortification completely.

My brave lad had also been badly wounded.

I quickly grabbed him and pulled him into a nearby hole in the ground, where he was safe.

In this way, I was able to repay him for saving my life on September 24, 1914.

Soon after, I suddenly felt my strength failing and saw blood trickling out of my wetsuit.

My faithful miner was also seriously wounded.

Fate had struck many others as well.

The rest of my unit, who had remained uninjured, rushed forward and joined a section of the 4th

Company under Reserve First Lieutenant Ludwig, which was storming Fort Kalte Erde.

I had no choice but to seek temporary shelter and rest in a hole in the ground until the wave of fire had rolled past.

After applying a makeshift bandage, I then set off on the return journey with my wounded comrades Bergmann and Gößl, supported by two lightly wounded men from my company and accompanied by a squad of captured Frenchmen.

We still had to contend with many skirmishes with enemy nests that the advancing troops had swept past.

Small squads had re-established themselves in the rear and were shooting down messengers and retreating German wounded, often from the rear. 45 Although my pistol was our only weapon, we managed to take many of them prisoner and bring them back.

In the Valley of the Dead, we found a field hospital leaning against a slope in the course of the afternoon.

It lay under heavy enemy fire, which from time to time thinned out the incoming columns of wounded.

The falling shells struck down many a brave soldier and hurled them in a high arc down into the depths of the gorge.

Here, German doctors performed their difficult duty selflessly and tirelessly.

Time and again, in the field and in the field hospitals, after intense nervous strain, a great sense of calm would wash over me when the doctor who was helping me stood before me.

Only those who, like me, have been wounded multiple times and have come to admire their work can sing the praises of what these men have accomplished out there.

I have been in the hands of many German doctors; I have always been treated excellently and felt safe and secure under their protection.

In many cases, I was not even recognized as an officer; my uniform was in tatters, and I was too weak and incapacitated to identify myself as an officer.

The German doctor made no distinction based on rank and was therefore an equal helper and comrade.

The bullet had grazed my lung and exited my body near my shoulder.

After a brief rest and refreshment, I was able to set out with my comrades and the French on the return journey to the main dressing station.

In the meantime, the enemy artillery fire had awakened from the paralysis into which the German fire and gas had forced it, and grew to a frenzied intensity.

One truly did not know which way to turn; the whole earth trembled from the columns of fire that rained down blow after blow and blazed toward the sky.

So I sought to make a small hill my objective, behind which I found temporary cover.

I had no idea that it was the firing position of one of our own heavy batteries.

The moment we reached the hill, a barrage of fire rained down on the battery.

We all rolled around in blood and dirt.

Once again, severely wounded, I lay on the ground and felt I could no longer move.

My two companions, Sergeant Schorr and Private Forster, who had been supporting me under the arm, lay covered in blood, one on top of me and the other beside me.

One had his head blown off; the other, who struggled with death for a short while longer, had half his face cut off.

I, too, had no doubt that I would now have to bid farewell to life.

I called out to my dear comrades Bergmann and Gößl, who had once again been severely wounded, to come to me so that I might bid them farewell forever.

An immense weariness overcame me, and I wanted to prepare myself here for my final sleep.

But Bergmann had not yet given up on me.

Again and again he tried to rouse me and urged me to drag myself a few more meters beyond the ridge.

I made the attempt, which failed, and told him to leave me alone and go back.

But he stayed.

At his gentle persuasion and pleas, I tried again and again, 46 until I finally succeeded by summoning my last ounce of strength and willpower.

In a trench of the artillery position, a doctor rushed up to me and was able, at least provisionally, to staunch the blood gushing from twelve wounds.

With superhuman effort, I dragged myself, guided by Bergmann and Gößl—both of whom were themselves severely wounded—along a connecting trench, a few hundred meters back.

Then my strength left me and I collapsed.

When I opened my eyes again, probably after an hour, I was lying far behind in a meadow on a stretcher.

I had been carried back during the night by loyal comrades and orderlies whom my lifesaver Bergmann had dispatched.

The light railway then took me to the field hospital in Romagne.

I was saved.

To this day, I still keep as a memento the coat that the doctor gave me back then, of which only a few whole pieces remained.

It was a single shred, blood-soaked and torn.

My sergeant Weber and many of my comrades were soon there to greet me in my sickbed.

I heard of the magnificent victory that our glorious regiment had won.

The success had, of course, cost an immeasurable number of lives.

Almost all the company commanders had been lost; many of the best, such as the brave Sonntag and the valiant Mantel, had given their lives.

Those two dear comrades had seen death staring them in the face.

In a particularly heartfelt and moving way, they had bid me farewell forever during the advance.

I was bleeding from many wounds and was severely weakened; but I felt full of pride that I had been there.

June 23

June, the regiment’s finest day, is also the proudest day of my life.

Immediately before the assault began, an orderly had given me a message on a report card, with greetings from my regiment and battalion commanders, informing me of the conferral of the E.

K.

I was brought there.

While in the military hospital, I received the award by mail along with the Corps Order of the Day dated June 20, 1916: In the name of His Majesty the German Emperor, I hereby confer the E.

K.

I to First Lieutenant Röhm, 10th

Infantry Regiment König, in recognition of the outstanding energy and bravery he has demonstrated on all occasions since the beginning of the war.

Signed

Baron von Gebsattel.

The pride I felt at receiving this award made me forget all my wounds and pain.

In the same way, the commendatory orders from all my superiors regarding the Battle of Thiaumont filled me with joyful satisfaction.

I would like to highlight three of them here: The daily report from the Supreme Army Command read: “To the right of the Meuse, our troops broke through, led by the 10th

Bavarian

Infantry Regiment König and the Bavarian

Insanterle Leib Regiment, advanced to the attack after effective preparatory fire on the Kalte Erde ridge and east of it, stormed past the Thiaumont fortifications, which were taken, captured most of the village of Fleury, and also gained 47 acres of Baur’s land.

So far, 2,673 prisoners, including 60 officers, have been taken to the assembly points.

His Majesty the King wrote to Colonel Mieg: Delighted by the great success achieved by My oldest regiment under your capable leadership, I congratulate you and the regiment; proud of My brave and valiant troops, I express My appreciation and My. * Ludwig.

Colonel Mieg issued the following order of the day to the regiment: My dear comrades!

My thanks for the wonderful achievements that the regiment—from the oldest battalion commander down to the youngest soldier—has accomplished in the recent battles comes too late, but is no less heartfelt.

You have fought bravely, wrested much ground from the enemy, and steadfastly held what you have won.

The regiment received support above all from His Majesty the King, our Supreme Regimental Patron, the Commander-in-Chief of the 5th Army, the Crown Prince of the German Empire, the Commanding General of the I.

and II.

Army Corps, and from the Division and Brigade Commanders.

The heavy, bloody losses we suffered during the assault were not in vain.

We mourn the heroic deaths of many of our brave leaders and men, who will, however, live on in our

memory of these battles.

We owe it to these heroes to continue doing everything in our power to ensure that no one is denied the laurel wreath; should the order to attack be given to us again, we will proceed with the same spirit of self-sacrifice.

Signed

Mieg.

The regiment heeded its commander’s call.

Particularly difficult days followed the assault; holding the lines we had won demanded great sacrifice.

Colonel Mieg had distinguished himself particularly through outstanding bravery during the regiment’s days of assault and combat.

He was truly a tower of strength in battle.

His Majesty awarded him the Royal

Military Max Joseph Order; no one more deserving could have received it.

Later, by a decision of the Order’s Chapter, my admission to the Military-Max-Joseph Order was also approved. A good friend at the War Ministry then sent me, when I had long since returned to the field, sent me a congratulatory telegram, since, according to established practice, the decision of the Order’s Chapter had always been confirmed by His Majesty the King.

I was therefore quite displeased when the General Command sent me the following communication from the Order: “Pursuant to the Highest Resolution of January 8,

January 1918, His Majesty the King has deigned to deny confirmation of the Chapter’s decision regarding the application of First Lieutenant Ernst Röhm, company commander in the 10th

Infantry Regiment, for admission to the Royal Military Order of St. Joseph.

Signed

Von Hellingrath.” As I later learned upon inquiry, the War Ministry had proposed to the King, just at the time my award was under consideration, a restriction on the conferral of orders for financial reasons.

The suspension lasted only a very short time, and I believe I am one of the few who were affected by it.

Afterward, awards were once again bestowed with gusto.

Of course, it annoyed me greatly.

As a staid front-line officer, I then had to make do with the three basic decorations.

Bavarian

Military Merit Order, 4th Class

Class with Crown and Swords, E.

K.

I and E.

K.

II, I had to be content with.

Afterward, I didn’t dwell on it anymore.

For the more medals one had, the more one was later suspected of having fought quite far in the rear.

As early as 1915, a lovely poem titled “The Distribution of Medals” was making the rounds in the trenches.

However, once it became known, its distribution was strictly forbidden.

It began: “One often hears, with a hint of complaint, the most astonished and puzzled question: why, on average, so few medals were awarded at the front.

My dear people, I must tell you, only those who have thus provided the best proof that they have the faintest idea of war can really ask such a question.

What use are medals to those on the front lines, who fight and kill almost every day? They are united only with their comrades and see no one else but the enemy; they could fall any day, indeed any hour—what use are medal ribbons to them then?” The moral at the end was: “From the front comes a hail of bullets, but from the rear comes the blessing of medals.” The poem was widely laughed at at the front.

It was sheer nonsense that the decorations initially remained with the staff officers in many cases.

Until, as a company commander, I was assigned to my E.

K.

I, for which the regimental commander had repeatedly recommended me, all sorts of officials at General Headquarters had to be fancied with them first.

Even if the formula for how to distribute awards fairly has still not been found, bureaucracy has, as best it could, stepped in precisely in this area.

I That this practice is more widespread today than ever before is merely mentioned in passing here.

I witnessed a particularly witty manifestation of this hallowed institution in the field in 1916: I applied for a subsidy to purchase a urgently needed new uniform, using surplus funds from my pay.

I could not afford this myself, as I had subscribed to war bonds with the money I had available.

Personally, I had at the time taken the position that war bonds should be subscribed to by those who defended the homeland at home.

But my regiment commander had talked me into it until I gave in.

Now I needed a uniform, but had no money left, so I applied for the aforementioned subsidy.

The division then rendered the following Solomonic decision: “If an officer can subscribe, an economic hardship cannot be recognized.

The application is therefore not suitable for submission to higher authorities.” So, now I was in a bind.

I’d lost my money and couldn’t afford a uniform either.

Nothing beats the holy sH.

Bureaucrat-sausage. 10.

Stay at a military hospital; adjutant at the War Ministry.

In the hospital in Romagne, I didn’t know where to lay my body, which was riddled with holes.

The doctor called me poor Lazarus; he always had a very strenuous physical task ahead of him when he left my bed after changing the various bandages.

From there I went via Montmedy to Frankfurt a.

M.

to Munich.

There I was admitted to the military hospital “Kriegsschule,” where Dr.

Krecke took loving care of me.

I was a good and obedient patient and was therefore praised by him.

The healing process proceeded smoothly.

Whatever still needed to be repaired on my nose—which had been somewhat out of alignment since my first wound in 1914—was taken over by the proven senior staff surgeon Dr.

Haslauer in the most meticulous medical and comradely manner.

In the rooms of the building where I had been mentally trained to be a soldier in 1907, I was now physically turned into a soldier once again.

Once I was able to move about somewhat again and get around with two crutches, I was transferred—because I had been “so well-behaved”—to the military hospital in Hobenaschau, which owed virtually everything to the care of Baroness von Cramer Klett.

With touching love and the utmost care and conscientiousness, Baroness von Eramer-Klett took care of all the patients, both officers and enlisted men.

As if by a miracle, my recovery progressed so rapidly there.

The kind heart and generous hand of our caring hosts were, of course, quite misused by some gentlemen; some enjoyed their stay in beautiful Hohenaschau so much that they didn’t want to leave at all.

That is actually what prompted me to leave Aschau earlier than the doctor had approved and to recover at my parents’ home in Munich.

Incidentally, I hoped to be able to make myself useful in some way at a Munich command headquarters during my convalescence.

I did not want to join a replacement battalion under any circumstances.

I, on the other hand, had a pronounced aversion to it.

And this stemmed from my time in the field regiment, where I had experienced the consequences of the training and education of the reserve troops.

In my opinion, the entire organization was ill-suited for prolonged military operations.

The reserve battalion had to be subordinate to the field regiment.

The field commander had to be in a position to exert influence over the activities of the reserve battalion.

In particular, he should have had authority over the officers.

Then many “unfit” men would have failed to prove their unfitness.

In the reserve battalions, whatever the home guards deemed appropriate took place.

The field officers were usually so put off by the operation that they hurried back to their frontline units as quickly as possible.

Exceptions, such as those that occasionally occurred in the 10th

Infantry Regiment, do not alter this fact.

Above all, however, the company commanders, most of whom had spent only a short time at the front or none at all, did not understand the fighter’s spirit at all.

Certainly, it was an often avoidable hardship when front-line soldiers who wanted to return to their units in the field were indiscriminately assigned to other field formations.

A visit to my garrison town, which I undertook after my recovery, provided me with clear evidence of the damage caused here by improper treatment.

I inquired at the barracks about people from my company and learned that proceedings for desertion had been initiated against a man from my field company.

Since I knew the man from the outside as one of my bravest men—he had always been at the front of every patrol as a volunteer—I went to see him right away.

He told me of his ordeal since being wounded in the field and of his efforts to return to his old company.

Since some of his superiors, naturally home-front soldiers, didn’t like him, he was assigned, of all places, to a completely unfamiliar regiment.

He then refused this assignment.

In tears, he begged me to intercede on his behalf and get him back to his regiment in the field.

I was happy to be able to help him.

Out there, he proved himself to be a fine man once again.

One case among many.

Frontline officers will have a story to tell about the trouble they’ve faced due to the way the reserve units operate.

That is why I avoided the replacement battalion and applied to the Deputy General Command of the J.

Army Corps for a position.

Since I was not yet able to work in the office, I was given a stack of files to take home and process.

These were the lists of indispensable officers, requests for declarations of indispensability, extensions thereof, etc.

I do not wish to describe what I saw in these lists and requests, nor what I felt inside; this work repulsed me, and I asked to be relieved of it.

I then reported to Colonel Koller at the War Ministry, with whom I was related and friends, and asked for a different assignment.

Colonel Koller, who enjoyed great prestige in the War Ministry, provisionally took me personally into his department and initiated me into the secrets of the War Ministry's service.

Shortly thereafter, the head of the Army Department, First Lieutenant Baron Gustav Kreß von Kressenstein, decided to appoint an adjutant to assist him, as his sphere of responsibility had expanded considerably.

He chose me for the position.

The department's previous private secretary, Göhl, who had been the chief's right-hand man for ages, greeted my arrival with undisguised suspicion.

Following Lieutenant Colonel von Kreß's instructions, I had to completely redefine my scope of duties myself.

My task was to relieve him of as much of his workload as possible.

The good private secretary soon saw that I was not taking anything away from his honor, and resigned himself—at first grumbling, later out of recognition—to the inevitable.

We became quite good comrades.

Lieutenant Colonel Baron von Kreß was arguably one of the most capable officers in the Royal Army

Army and possessed outstanding and comprehensive knowledge in all fields related in any way to the military.

This East German officer was, in fact, initially truly irreplaceable in his position.

After temporary assignments at the front, which he had requested, he had to be called back time and again.

He possessed an unfailing work ethic.

He arrived at the office early in the morning and did not leave until late at night, with only a short lunch break.

It was from him that I first learned how to work properly.

Lieutenant Colonel von Kreß was always friendly and collegial.

He was not only closely related to the Minister of War, Baron von Kreß; he was also his closest advisor.

No major decision was made without consulting him.

The Bavarian

Minister of War was a remarkable figure.

I came to hold this honest, wise, and energetic man in high esteem.

What he accomplished during the war at the head of the most important Bavarian ministry for his immediate homeland and for the entire German fatherland can be appreciated only by the few insiders who were close to him, That His Majesty the King, on occasion, allowed himself to be swayed by disagreements between the Minister of War and the Minister of the Interior to let go of this troublesome man—who, not least because he was a Protestant, was not to the liking of many influential Bavarian circles—was a tragic misfortune that took its bitter revenge on November 7,

November 1918.

The Minister of War, Baron von Kreß—of this I am certain—would not have surrendered the field to the Red mob without a fight.

I am personally convinced that on the day of the dismissal of the Minister of War, Baron von Kreß, the seed of the overthrow was sown, that it was made possible in Bavaria in the first place only by this.

Far too few people realized the significance of this event at the time.

But those in the know did not make public how things had actually unfolded, and the general public had far too much to contend with in terms of their own worries and hardships.

Moreover, the press, which was, of course, under the censorship of the War Ministry, reported only briefly on the fact. 52 A man like the upright, honest, and far-sighted Lieutenant Colonel Baron von Kreß was deeply shaken by this royal decision.

He never spoke to me about it; but from those days I have deduced for myself the explanation as to why Lieutenant Colonel von Kreß, in the days of November 1918, did not find the strength of his own accord to confront the events decisively.

For no one could, as he could, have such deep insight into the course of events since the fall of the Minister of War, Baron von Kreß; no one could see more clearly how, pillar by pillar, a system collapsed that was no longer capable or determined to fight for its existence.

In this I see, for myself, the reason for my conduct during and after the November revolt, and perhaps also for my conduct on November 8,

November 1923.

The Army Department was the most important department of the War Ministry.

In addition to the entire General Staff, the department’s purview included all general army and administrative matters, as well as all troop-related matters across all branches.

All the threads connecting the Front Army with the Home Central Office converged here.

The Army Department was in constant contact with the Grand Headquarters and the other War Ministries, in particular the leading Royal

Prussian Ministry, the Army Department was in constant communication.

Unfortunately, the lack of a unified War Ministry for the Empire meant that a great deal of unnecessary duplication of effort had to be undertaken.

Monitoring political developments was also the responsibility of the head of the Army Department.

It was precisely this latter area of work, which fell to Lieutenant Colonel Falkner von Sonnenburg's press office, that at times took on decisive importance.

Lieutenant Colonel von Sonnenburg was a mature and highly experienced officer who cultivated his own special connections.

It was not always easy for the department head to work with this somewhat headstrong subordinate.

Moreover, the nature of this field of activity demanded swift action and independent decision-making.

Lieutenant Colonel von Sonnenburg exercised press censorship in a harsh, often one-sided manner.

The spokespeople of the national opposition at the time, especially the Pan-Germans, would know a thing or two about that.

This frequently brought him into conflict and contention with the press monitoring offices at the General Headquarters and the Royal

Prussian War Ministry, whereby, as it seemed to me, the position of the Bavarian Press Office was not always pleasing.

On the other hand, for reasons I could not yet comprehend at the time, the often inflammatory language of the anti-state publications did not meet with the necessary rebuke.

Every now and then something happened here, as if something were happening.

This was then framed in the formula that the publication was likely to "shake confidence in the final victory."

In my view, Lieutenant Colonel von Sonnenburg, by his tolerance of anti-state and, in many cases, pacifist publications, is one of those responsible for the course of events in the homeland in 1918.

The role he played in the War Ministry after the November coup was entirely in line with this attitude.

The remaining sections and departments of the Army Department were in the hands of experienced specialist officers, all of whom, through dedicated work, did their utmost to meet all the needs of the field army at home.

Indeed, they were almost exclusively wounded or sick soldiers from the field army who served here only until their recovery.

In addition to my duties as an adjutant in the review, examination, and preparation of documents from

all departments and the files prepared by the other divisions of the Ministry, I was specifically responsible for handling matters that were the subject of debate in the State Parliament and for personal correspondence with the members of the Bavarian State Parliament.

The various complaints that reached the members of the State Parliament over the long course of the war were discussed during these debates.

In this way, I got to know many parliamentarians, not all of whom left a favorable impression on me.

In particular, some prominent figures from the Bavarian Center Party displayed an air of superiority that was in stark disproportion to their personal stature.

Alongside them, I also saw some men who were earnestly striving to serve the fatherland to the best of their ability in their respective roles.

Thus I came to know, for

B.

In the Social Democratic representative Franz Schmitt, I came to appreciate a man who was truly serious about caring for the welfare of our fatherland.

If I recall correctly, he himself had lost sons in the field.

I enjoyed listening to him when he calmly and objectively expressed what was on his mind.

He also knew how to weigh which complaints from the front were justified and which were not.

Once he took part in a delegation of members of parliament to the front.

There, among others, he was received by the German Crown Prince and drawn into a lengthy conversation.

I can still see that old but youthful-looking man with the full beard sitting before me today, as he, inspired by what he had seen out there, reported on it and spoke in high praise of the Crown Prince of the German Empire.

Unfortunately, he later failed to put his insights to practical use.

The Army Department maintained close ties with the other departments of the War Ministry.

In particular, communication was especially active with the head of the War Office, General Harlander, a like-minded and intelligent man, and the head of the Army Administration Department, Lieutenant Colonel Hörnle, who, like Lieutenant Colonel von Kreß, possessed extensive knowledge and an extraordinary capacity for work.

During my time as adjutant to the Army Department, I gained insights that were granted to only a few.

This was due to the fact that for a brief period, virtually all orders from the War Ministry passed

through my hands, and that all secret reports from the front, in particular those from the Royal

Bavarian

Military Representative at the Grand Headquarters, came to my attention, I learned of matters and events that would otherwise have remained hidden from an ordinary mortal infantry captain—I had been promoted to captain in April 1917.

But I also saw what an immense amount of work was demanded of the few in positions of authority and what great achievements were accomplished despite the irrational and petty resistance of authorities and organizations back home.

If the army at the front today rightly attributes the blame for the collapse to the failure of the homeland, then, to the credit of the Royal

Bavarian

The War Ministry has stated that it had to wage a titanic struggle against the irrationality and malice of civilian authorities—many of whom were hostile toward the army—and that it has successfully done so for many years.

The military and the civilian sectors will always vie for supremacy in the life of nations.

A state in which the soldier does not have the upper hand cannot maintain peace nor win a war.

In “militaristic” Germany, the civilian sector ultimately prevailed over the steel helmet during the war; meanwhile, the “democracies” of the West bowed to the dictates of the French commander-in-chief Foch and the British Field Marshal Wilson, who made no secret of their contempt for the “Frocks,” and —won the victory.

In the spring of 1917, my regimental comrade Major Hörauf visited me during his home leave.

As 1st

General Staff Officer of the 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division, he had made a name for himself in Romania.

He was later awarded the Royal

Military Order of Max Joseph was later awarded to him for his deeds.

He told me about the situation outside and rekindled my longing to be back at the front.

Finally, he ordered me, as long as I was not fit for field service, to at least accept a command within the division staff.

I gladly agreed: Lieutenant Colonel von Kreß made my return to the front contingent upon the appointment of a suitable successor.

I searched and soon found a replacement.

With a commendatory evaluation, I left my esteemed department head and the field of work I had pioneered in mid-May 1917. 11.

To the front for the third time.

I was now traveling to the front for the third time.

Romania was the land of my hope, Focsani my destination.

Since I was still far from being fit for field duty, I was assigned as second adjutant to the division staff and placed under Captain Kiesser, General Staff Officer and Ib, from whom I learned a great deal.

I remained in this position for a short time and was soon promoted to first adjutant to the 1st

General Staff Officer Major Hörauf.

Focsani was a charming little town with particularly beautiful quarters, the likes of which I had never seen in the West.

The positions of the 26th, 27th, 28th

Infantry and the 22nd

Field Artillery—55th Regiment were relatively well-fortified.

Lieutenant General von Huller received me as division commander; shortly after my arrival at the division, Major General Baron Nagel von Aichberg took over command in his place.

With him, a leader of the highest sense of responsibility and the most chivalrous disposition took the helm of the division.

Personally brave and selfless, he visited the frontline soldiers in the front lines, inquired about their complaints and concerns, and tried everywhere to encourage and help them personally.

He lived solely for his division.

He also demanded total dedication from his staff for the good of the troops.

In Major Hör auf, he had found an equal partner in this endeavor. Personally, I soon aligned myself with the general, whom I came to appreciate and admire more and more, and enjoyed his trust to a great extent.

Among the regimental commanders of the division, Lieutenant Colonel Bogendörfer stood out in particular; a daredevil to whom the 26th

Infantry Regiment.

In the artillery staff, General Pöhlmann—who, alas, fell all too soon—Lieutenant Colonel Beckh, and Captain Geib proved their worth.

In Lieutenant Colonel von Chlingensperg auf Berg, the infantry had, as the 10th

Infantry Regiment at Spada, a constant and faithful ally. For about two months, I had the opportunity, during the positional warfare on the Putna and the Sereth, to get to know the troops, their positions, and their needs.

Most of the time I accompanied General von Nagel, who visited some unit of his division on the front line almost daily; occasionally I went with Major Hör or alone to the troops' positions and quarters.

In August 1917, the division advanced east and north of Focşani to launch an attack across the Siret.

After local successes, the advance came to a halt due to the deployment of fresh Romanian forces.

The fighting occasionally intensified to great ferocity, during which the 26th

Infantry Regiment distinguished itself in particular.

However, the enemy counterattacks were unsuccessful.

Then the situation gradually eased again and reverted to the usual positional warfare.

The division staff returned from the front lines to Focşani.

During the fighting, I was assigned as an orderly officer to the 1st

General Staff Officer; there I had the opportunity to learn from Major Hörauf's calm and confident manner of issuing orders.

Following the transfer of the 2nd General Staff Officer (Tb), Major Kie sser, to the Bavarian War Ministry as a military attaché, General von Nagel entrusted me with his duties; the General Staff Officer who succeeded Kie sser in the division was assigned to the Intelligence Service (Ic).

As 2nd

General Staff Officer (Ib), I had a wide range of responsibilities that gave me great pleasure.

The regulation of all supplies, logistics, provisions and rations, medical and veterinary services—in short, all matters concerning the welfare and well-being of the troops—were now in my hands.

In this, I had faithful helpers.

Above all, as my adjutant, my brave Lieutenant Bergmann, whom I had brought in.

Cooperation with the division surgeon and division veterinarian, especially with Quartermaster Henselt and his capable and practical-minded successor Seber, as well as the entire well-trained quartermaster staff, was smooth and collegial.

The young quartermaster officer Weber was also fully up to the task.

After all, it was a matter of cultivating and harvesting the fertile soil of Romania not only for our division, but also for the rest of the fighting army and for our suffering homeland.

During the quieter period, the importance of this economic utilization of the land even outweighed the tasks at the front.

Large numbers of troops from the fighting army had to be withdrawn for this purpose, and almost the entire stock of horses and the vehicle convoys had to be put to the service of this economic necessity.

In addition, I also enlisted the entire able-bodied population of the country to assist.

Through the local commanders appointed to the individual towns, I had a sort of census conducted, on the basis of which the able-bodied men and women were then put to work on our agricultural tasks.

It is understandable that the population, which had initially watched with a smirk as the brave German soldiers toiled, did not welcome these measures with enthusiasm.

However, since their own sustenance was made dependent on that of the Germans, they soon resigned themselves to the situation and worked diligently. I had a valuable helper in the Catholic division chaplain Weis, who spent much time with the troops and supplemented my personal assessments and observations regarding the troops' needs.

The field post had in Field Post Chief Clerk Hümmert a knowledgeable and determined leader who did not falter even in difficult situations.

At the turn of 1917/18, the Russian and Romanian armistice negotiators met in Focsani and Râmnicu-Vâlcea.

German cavalry, German and Turkish divisions, including the 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division, advanced via Braila and Galatz.

The division was then assembled in the Mizil area to prepare for deployment to the Western Front.

The stay served primarily for the training of the troops and instruction in the tactics of offensive warfare according to the guidelines General Ludendorff had given to the army.

On January 7, 1918, Lieutenant General Baron von Nagel held a royal parade in Mizil in honor of His Majesty the King's birthday.

On April 17, 1918, the division left Romanian territory and moved toward the Western Front. 12.

General Staff Officer.

My commander had meanwhile requested my transfer to the 2nd Division General Staff Office.

General Staff Office of the Division.

His request, accompanied by a particularly laudatory justification and evaluation, was granted without further review or a probationary period, and I was transferred to the General Staff.

As a General Staff officer sent ahead, I traveled ahead of the division through Austria and Germany to Rethel.

On the way, I made a brief stop in Vienna to visit my sister and brother-in-law. There I could see how immensely the population of that great city was suffering from economic hardship.

The division assembled at Rethel.

The available time was used for drills.

The victorious March offensive had brought new experiences, which were now fruitfully applied to the continuation of the operations in which the division was to participate.

The division was in excellent condition; fully manned, rested, and well-equipped.

The mood was combative and eager for action.

I recorded the thoughts that concerned me at the time regarding the general state of the army in a memorandum, which I submitted to my division commander.

I have attached it as an appendix (Appendix 1).

Under the leadership of its esteemed commander, Lieutenant General Baron von Nagel, the division began its advance.

In place of Major Hörauf, who had been assigned to a general command, Captain Mar Pflaumer had assumed the duties of the 1st

General Staff Officer.

Personally brave and fearless, he was completely absorbed in his task.

It is not least to his credit that the 12th

Baper.

Infantry Division brilliantly passed the test posed by the bloody battles and turbulent days of the revolution.

The division advanced as part of the 7th

Army, initially advancing via Berry-au-Bac through the completely devastated battlefields of the March offensive, via Genicourt in a generally southerly direction, passing west of Reims.

Initially, the division marched as a reserve behind the advancing troops of the 1st

line, only to be suddenly thrown into battle at a decisive point when the advance stalled.

The attack proceeded brilliantly; the regiments fought excellently.

The division also demonstrated its unbroken will to attack on the western theater of war.

The neighboring divisions, which had already endured heavy strain, were, however, unable to keep up.

Thus, the offensive could not be continued.

We were quite isolated and abandoned, far ahead of the neighboring troops.

The lack of artillery and air support was particularly noticeable.

For this surprise operation, no special units had been assigned to the division, so that it was reliant solely on its light divisional artillery.

Immediately after the attack in early June, General Quartermaster Tudendorss arrived in person at the front in Lagery and summoned the General Staff officers from all command posts to report on the situation.

I was fortunate enough to be from the 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division, and saw the great man for the first time then.

After the commanders of the army and the corps and the General Staff officers of all divisions had reported, it was finally my turn. “And now tell me about the Bavarians!” General Ludendorff said to me in a friendly tone.

I was agitated by the heavy losses we had suffered due to a lack of heavy artillery, balloons, and aircraft —I spoke without hesitation—to the horror of the army and corps commanders present—about the division’s inadequate supplies and equipment, and requested the immediate allocation of the necessary reinforcements.

General Ludendorff expressed his highest praise for the division—he was fully informed of the course of the battle in all its details—and promised to grant my requests.

The very next day, the division received everything it needed.

Then the Quartermaster General had all the division orders reviewed, amended some that seemed too

conservative to him, and remarked regarding the 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division that it was, after all, positioned too far forward.

General von Nagel, however, would always have been in the front line if it had been at all possible.

The impression I took away from that great commander at the time was one that would stay with me for life.

I still remember that hour clearly today.

Building on this encounter, I would like to offer some fundamental reflections here on command authority and responsibility in the army in general.

General Ludendorff was undoubtedly the embodiment of the leader for every soldier.

His person also inspired confidence in ultimate victory and an honorable peace.

By virtue of his position, however, the general was only the chief advisor to the supreme commander of the army, but not himself a leader and commander in the true sense of the word.

Just as at this highest level of army leadership, the structure was the same at the command posts: alongside the commander stood the jointly responsible Chief of the General Staff or 1st

In reality, a significant part of the leadership—often the decisive part, and frequently the sole authority—rested in the hands of the General Staff.

In reality, a substantial part of the leadership—often the decisive part and frequently the sole part—lay in the hands of the General Staff.

I cannot conceal that I see a flaw in this.

If the commanders were unsuitable as leaders, they had to be relieved of their duties and replaced with capable ones. 59 General Ludendorff has, after all, already taken decisive action in this direction and earned the “friendship” of many generals for life. (His rejection by former “colleagues,” particularly in Bavaria, in the years 1925 and 1926 may thus become more understandable to some.)

However, he did not have the power to get to the root of the problem.

Leaders must lead, not the first assistants.

If the old guard was useless, young men had to take their place, not be placed alongside them.

After the storming of Douaumont, the Crown Prince of the German Empire requested from his imperial father the immediate promotion of the assault leaders to colonels and regimental commanders.

Just as this youthful, clear-sighted, and battle-savvy commander repeatedly demanded the promotion of

brave soldiers to officers.

His demands and exhortations, rejected by field marshals and military bureaucrats, unfortunately found no more favor at the highest levels than those of his brave brother, Prince Eitel Friedrich, who fought on the front lines from the beginning to the end of the war.

The system prevailed.

Napoleon, who had already held high command positions in his youth, won his wars with young generals; in Germany, not even a world war could eliminate the omnipotence of the cabinets and personnel offices.

Only the airmen were granted the opportunity to attain leadership positions at a young age; the battle-hardened, energetic, and resolute front-line officer was subject to the orders of level-headed generals and astute general staff officers—and was defeated.

At the front, there was no shifting or division of responsibility.

The regimental commander, as well as the company and platoon leaders, were solely responsible.

Before God and man, but above all before their own consciences, they had to justify what they ordered.

In the higher command, the Führer's staff shared responsibility.

The system of shared responsibility is an absolute weakness.

Els kolranos &sto — one man should be in charge — as Homer already said.

The more people in charge, the more there are who can "shirk responsibility," as the lovely expression goes, which, however, only flourished to rampant proportions in the New German Republic.

Thus, I believe that two things are essential for the army, in peace, but even more so in war: leadership with sole responsibility by the commanders, not by the General Staff; selection of leaders not according to seniority, but according to ability and performance.

The attack was led by the 26th

Infantry Regiment.

No sooner had the regiment taken possession of the village than General von Nagel mounted his horse and rode into the village with his staff. 60 But beyond the village, the regiment was unable to gain any further ground, and the flanking regiments, too, could make no headway either sideways or backward.

That day I spoke with the local French doctor, whose house had been completely destroyed.

He had lost everything and had become a poor man overnight.

In the full confidence of our victories, I said to him that he must surely wish for the war to end soon.

He replied proudly that he did not; he admitted that we had achieved great successes so far, but the war must continue until France had won.

I shook hands with this patriotic enemy with great respect; I thought wistfully about what a narrow-minded German, had he been in the same situation, might have replied.

Already that night, the French had begun to bombard the town, particularly the church tower, from which Lieutenant Brand of the 1st

7th

Chevalier Regiment, had been observing the enemy.

By noon, the situation had deteriorated to the point where the infantry on the outskirts of the village could barely hold their ground.

Heavy fire rained down incessantly on the entire town.

So, in the end, there was nothing left to do but withdraw further with the division staff.

The combat staff moved in short bursts, one by one, toward the predetermined new combat position.

I stayed at my commander’s side and hopped back with him from hole to hole.

General von Nagel remarked that I was, after all, used to the conditions at Verdun and should therefore be able to handle it properly.

While the 26th

Infantry Regiment fought for control of Ville-en-Tardenois, the 27th

Infantry Regiment under Colonel Kaiser and subsequently the 28th

Infantry Regiment to endure fierce fighting to the south and southeast of it.

Masor Hofmann brought relief to the hard-pressed 27th

Infantry Regiment, Masor Hofmann, with his 11/28, brought relief through an independent, well-prepared advance on Jonquery.

This officer always knew how to clearly assess the situation, then make a firm decision and carry it out with iron willpower.

In the unit, he was nicknamed Trotsky because of his cold determination.

Yet he was the best father and leader of his unit, which clung to him with passion and trust.

The flank of the 27th

Infantry Regiment was open.

So Major Hofmann decided, taking a wide sweep, to attack the enemy facing the 27th

Infantry Regiment and then advance over the heights and through the wooded terrain toward Jonquery.

His battalion rolled up the enemy's flank and rear in a pure infantry assault, supported only by machine guns; enemy armored cars sent ahead in haste were mowed down.

The advance was a resounding success.

The battalion's enthusiasm was immense; the wounded forgot their pain and joined in the general jubilation.

Hofmann's plan to advance to the Marne failed due to a complete lack of artillery support.

Thus, the line captured on June 1

June was not crossed for the time being.

Billeen, Tardenois, and Jonquery remained in our hands despite fierce enemy counterattacks.

In this area, the division now settled in for a longer period.

The staff took up quarters in Crugu y.

The detachments were deployed, reserves were withdrawn, and the artillery positions were established.

The establishment of the position, allocation of quarters, bringing up the baggage train, traffic control, the establishment of ammunition depots, the organization of food supplies, medical and veterinary services, air raid and gas protection, and supply services, as well as the efficient utilization of the terrain, once again provided me with a wide field of activity.

Here I was in my element and imagined that no one could match me in this field.

There was always unrest and disorder, and that suited me just fine. Sometimes the troops would complain, sometimes the general staff would complain.

There I gave what I thought was right; here I took whatever I could get my hands on.

The difficult road conditions often threatened to bring the regular supply of provisions to a standstill.

The troops cannot begin to fathom the heartache that the General Staff officer in charge of supplies often experiences.

They rightly demand that everything they need is always there.

They do not want to acknowledge that this often requires immense effort.

In addition to the extensive work my field of activity offered me, I visited the troops' positions and quarters almost daily, either as my commander's escort or on my own.

In the Zuli, the Chief of the Army Staff, Oderst Rein≠ dard, summoned the subordinate General Staff officers and, in his clear, superior manner, announced the orders for the continuation of the offensive, which aimed not only at crossing the Marne but also at the capture of Reims.

Together with the 22nd

Infantry Division, we were to advance eastward into the wooded area between Epernay and Reims.

Preparations were carried out down to the last detail; the artillery deployment was executed with the utmost care; ammunition was stacked in the depots; and road traffic was regulated.

All lessons learned were put to use; whatever could be done for the troops was done by the command.

After the heaviest artillery preparation, the attack broke out and overran the first line of defense.

An Italian brigade, insofar as it had not been destroyed by the artillery fire, was almost entirely captured; but the French halted the further advance in completely unbreached positions.

What had happened?

Through treachery, the French learned of our attack.

They took their own countermeasures; the Italian ally—as the statements of prisoners, including officers, revealed—was not informed of the impending danger, but was simply sacrificed.

Heavy and costly fighting broke out along the newly captured lines.

The division commander had once again rushed to the front lines with his staff, where at times as many as six staffs were crammed together in a so-called "château" in Champlat.

I do not consider it fundamentally correct, especially from the perspective of the front-line soldier, for higher staffs to move their command posts too far forward; the lower staffs, in particular the troop staffs, are thereby deprived of the command posts to which they are entitled and do not know where they are to take shelter.

The result is the accumulation of multiple command posts in a very confined space.

Because the command post in Champlat remained in the thick of the fighting for several days and was under constant, heavy fire, calm, deliberate command was simply not possible.

Rest, even at night, was virtually impossible.

One morning I awoke to a clamour that I still heard as if in a dream.

A heavy shell had torn away the wall of our sleeping and work quarters and had crashed into the stable building next door.

My roommates had already left this inhospitable place during the previous bombardment, which I had not heard while asleep.

I could not carry out my specific duties at the front at all; in order to coordinate the delivery of ammunition and supplies, I therefore had to move my workstation further to the rear.

The July offensive had also stalled at other points along the front; we did not yet suspect at the time that it would be our last major offensive.

Even in these difficult times, the division stood its ground; superior enemy attacks were repelled.

Toward the end of August, the division was withdrawn and slowly moved back, step by step.

At first, we almost welcomed it as a relief when we were able to abandon the costly occupation of unfavorable positions and breathe more freely again.

But the mood turned grave and sad as we had to voluntarily cede, piece by piece, the ground we had fought for with the blood of our best men to the advancing French.

We heard nothing more of the offensive in Flanders, in which we were also supposed to take part; only of heavy fighting to our northwest.

It had become clear to all of us how serious the situation had become for us.

Bothered only slightly by the enemy, our troops retreated sector by sector.

I have no fond memories of the turn of August/September 1918; the days passed in sadness.

Prior to the division’s deployment in the Lille-Roubaix area from the 24th

to the 30th

August, General von Nagel visited the Chief of the General Staff of the 6th

Army, First Lieutenant Hergott, in Tournai.

I accompanied my commander and requested that the division’s rear services be immediately transferred to the homeland.

The division had a large supply depot, which I had generously stocked with all necessary clothing and equipment for the troops, and an excellently managed commissary, which was fully stocked with goods of all kinds.

Lieutenant Colonel Hergott agreed to the transport back to the homeland.

Thus I was able to save all the supplies; for transporting them along or shipping them out would not have been possible later.

On the 21st

G.

I wrote to my father: “The Austrian peace note, very good in both content and form, will hopefully, if rejected, have the effect of finally making the homeland aware of the gravity of the situation, uniting it, and putting an end to the endless whining and lamenting.

Then we’ll manage.

Out there with the army, things are moving!” The month of September found the division on the Flanders Front.

We were there on August 31

August to relieve the 6th

Cavalry Division.

The English had launched a major offensive and had penetrated deep into our front.

In the chaotic funnel-shaped terrain, the battle broke down into skirmishes between individual groups.

Because we were stationed in isolated concrete blocks protruding from the ground—far apart from one another and connected only by narrow walkways on slatted platforms—our weak positions were, so to speak, isolated one by one.

It was precisely the bravest, who held out on their bunkers until the very end, who fell into enemy hands.

Thus, Major Hofmann, along with a small group of his brave comrades-in-arms, was also

September, after a fierce and courageous resistance on Height 60 near Ypres, following a complete encirclement and close combat to the bitter end, were overwhelmed and taken prisoner.

The British had surrounded the crater, the last refuge of the brave squad.

Various leaders, including Major Hofmann, had taken up positions in accordance with their experience of combat in Flanders.

I, too, reported in detail to my commander after we had repeatedly abandoned our positions and forward posts.

Once a remedy had been sought and found, the English advance thwarted our intended plans.

Our losses were very heavy.

The 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division had suffered particularly heavy losses.

After the British breakthrough, I was sent to the front to determine the front line and the command posts of the regiments and battalions.

As I drove along the main road from Roeselare to Menin, a strange sight met my eyes.

At wide intervals and distances, I found command posts here, small groups of infantry there, then a machine gun, and somewhere else a gun; the entire intervening area was open and unoccupied.

A few men held the entire wide front.

Whenever the English tried to advance further, a group of infantry would make itself known somewhere in the terrain and fire; now and then a machine gun would rattle as well.

The Tommy immediately abandoned the advance.

Given the situation at the front, the Englishman could have marched unhindered eastward via ZIseghem deep into the heart of Belgium.

No one would have been able to stop him; for apart from the loose veil of the tightly packed 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division and the Guard Cavalry Division, there were no longer any troops behind the front who could have offered resistance.

A few held the fate of the entire front in their hands and mastered it.

This was also the case in the subsequent battles of retreat.

If just a few men held their ground, the enemy dared not advance.

Admittedly, a certain portion of our “replacement soldiers” were useless by the end of 1918; the English and French were much worse.

As long as even one of our guns was firing or a machine gun was rattling, they could not be moved forward.

Those were the “victors”!

Heroic Germany was not defeated on the battlefield.

The German soldier only breathed his last when his homeland took him from him.

British Field Marshal Wilson writes in his diary, published in 1927, about October 1918: “Certainly, the Boches are in a bad way, but we are not in a position to exploit their weakness.

The French generals explain that their troops are tres fatigues.

We know what that means.

The British Army is weary, but willing to fight.

The French army is very exhausted and neither willing nor able to fight.

The American army is incapable of fighting.” On October 3,

I wrote to Haufe: “I hope you don’t take the seemingly unfavorable news too hard; with strong nerves, the situation will be resolved again.

Here, too, the Entente’s main thrust was soon repelled; the enemy could not achieve further successes.” In the meantime, on October 2,

to the staff of the Guard Corps, as the flu had rendered several General Staff officers unfit for duty there.

The Deputy Chief of the General Staff was Major von Tay⸗ sen, who performed exceptionally well during these days of major combat.

I was assigned a field of work that was entirely new to me.

In addition to collecting and evaluating all reports and news from the front, I was responsible for proposing the deployment of aircraft and balloons, signal troops, etc.

The work kept me fully occupied day and night, gave me great joy, and brought me satisfaction.

Only a few hours in the morning were available for a short sleep.

But it was a true joy to work in this Prussian staff.

Generous, recognizing what was essential, not getting bogged down in trivialities—every officer on the staff had been trained in this way.

At the same time, the leadership kept a firm grip on the reins.

A 5 Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 65 wonderful camaraderie prevailed, which made it easy even for the newcomer to feel at home here.

I summarized my admiration for the heroic achievements of the troops in the draft of a daily order that the Commanding General issued to the troops, and which I am including here because it provides an overview of all the units that were to see action in the great battles of the fall of 1918: Jeperen Group.

General Command of the Guard Corps.

Ic/la/Na No. 139 587.

Following an overwhelming artillery barrage, the enemy succeeded in breaking through our positions on September 28,

September 1918.

Outnumbered eleven to one, they were able to break through the weak positions, which were spread out over a wide front and shattered by artillery fire, With insurmountable heroism, the weakened remnants of the combat troops of the line divisions, effectively supported by reinforcements from the intervention divisions, broke the enemy's assault—conducted with a massive deployment of men and material—and halted their further advance in prepared lines.

Unreserved praise is due to the brave infantry, who, with bayonets, rifles, machine guns, and mortars, withstood the overwhelming onslaught of the enemy and held their ground to the utmost at exposed posts; sappers, employed primarily as infantry, stood by their side.

Light and heavy artillery were particularly exposed to the concentrated fire of the enemy artillery.

Here, too, the crews of the gun emplacements defended themselves against the enemy assault troops until the last shot—sometimes in close combat.

They repelled the enemy assault troops.

Reconnaissance units of the divisional cavalry brought back valuable intelligence from forward posts.

It is thanks to the tireless dedication of the signal troops that the command was kept informed of all sectors of the massive battle.

All proved fully equal to the high demands placed on the signalmen, the signal finders, the flag signalers, and the radio operators.

Despite facing a vastly superior enemy air force and strong ground defenses, and in spite of unfavorable weather conditions, the Group's air units gave their all in reconnaissance and attack missions on every day of combat to assist the hard-fighting troops on the battlefield. "Even the observers in the balloons, who were repeatedly the target of enemy air attacks, stood firm at their posts in tireless service.

The ground troops independently engaged in ground combat, halting the enemy's advance with artillery, machine guns, and hand grenades, and shot down ten enemy aircraft during the major battle days in a successful defensive action. "Orderlies and medical personnel rescued and cared for their wounded and sick comrades with self-sacrificing devotion.

Horse and motor vehicle convoys, working tirelessly, delivered ammunition and supplies, while engineering, armament, and park troops provided the best possible support to the fighting forces.

Last but not least, all administrative authorities and the personnel of the K.

H.

Qu., the 7th

X. 1918. 66 railway workers, the ammunition and supply depots, and in particular the local command posts, have fully lived up to their difficult tasks.

I thank all officers, medical and veterinary officers, and civil servants; I thank all ranks and enlisted men from the bottom of my heart for their heroism, their endurance, and their faithful fulfillment of duty, and I express my deepest appreciation to all.

In these fateful days we are now experiencing, we must all stand together as one and exert all our strength to the utmost for the good of our beloved German fatherland.

I know that I can continue to rely on your bravery, loyalty, and perseverance.

Commanding General von Böckmann.

In mid-October 1918, the 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division from the Flanders Front; I therefore rejoined the staff of the 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division.

On October 12,

I wrote home: “Militarily, things aren’t looking great at the moment, mainly because our soldiers have been poisoned back home.

Well, that will get better again.” Undoubtedly, the mood at the front was gloomy at that time.

I was therefore almost constantly with the forward troops, often accompanied by my faithful orderly officer Bergmann.

My attention was focused above all on improving the food situation; through conversations with the men in the trenches, I learned where there were particular shortages and where help was needed.

Likewise, the tireless Quartermaster Seber himself took exemplary care of the troops, whom he visited on the front lines.

My commander, General von Nagel, the true father of his division, always had the fullest understanding for all the troops’ needs.

He was on the move almost daily to personally see that everything was in order.

Never have I felt the lack of active officers in the troops as keenly as I did during that time.

Only an active officer, born of the troops and grown up with them, can truly empathize with the spirit and feelings of the men.

For officers on leave, this spiritual kinship—if I may call it that—is generally lacking.

This is not meant as a reproach to these officers; it would be sad if the active-duty officer did not have this advantage.

I constantly briefed the general on my observations and findings.

Most of my suggestions met with his approval.

Only one request, which I repeatedly presented to him at the time, did he consistently reject.

In order to experience the hardships of the troops firsthand and to be able to make my own personal observations, I wanted to serve for a few weeks as an ordinary soldier in an infantry regiment of the division.

In view of the fact that a large portion of the staff officers were incapacitated by the flu and that a specially trained officer was needed precisely in that position during these difficult times, my commander denied me this request.

Ir 67 The division remained at rest for only a short time.

Unfortunately, I could not enjoy it for long; for slowly the flu also took hold of me.

At first I tried to fight it off; but then it forced me to my knees after all.

It was my first illness in the field.

My orderly officer wrote on October 21

to my mother: “Of all the officers, your son has to endure the most.

He has a fairly high fever.

The doctor fears that something else might develop.

Above all, this illness has robbed him of all his strength.

So, in addition to his physical exhaustion, he is also suffering from mental exhaustion.” I felt that I could no longer cope with the illness, and on October 21

to Field Hospital 38, which was conscientiously run by the Chief Medical Officer, Dr.

Schu.

From there, I soon returned to the hospital in Hall near Brussels with my fellow sufferer, Lieutenant Enderle, adjutant to the engineer commander of the division.

The division doctor had pretty much given up on me.

In any case, he reported to the division commander that my return was not to be expected and that my position would have to be filled by someone else.

The time in the military hospital in Hall was one of the most agonizing of my life.

Lieutenant Enderle and I lay in a large ward with about ten other sick officers.

The care was poor at first.

The doctor was unable to assert himself, as the lower-ranking nursing staff offered open and defiant resistance.

The orderlies did not even accept the sick officers' requests; in response to my complaint, the doctor declared himself unable to remedy the situation.

That was when I first saw the spirit of the 1918 rear echelon.

At first I was stunned, then furious, and then deeply saddened.

So this is what it looked like here!

And no one who was determined to push through with a firm hand!

Added to this were the reports from the press, which was completely under the Führer's control.

The dismissal of General Ludendorff and the shameful discussions about the Kaiser's abdication!

The indifference and indecision of the sick officers wanted to drive us—Leulnant Enderle and me—into a frenzy.

It was clear to me that back home, everyone had lost their minds.

But at the front, we knew, stood the front-line army, weakened but unbowed.

That is where we longed to be.

On November 2, 1918, he wrote to Haufe: "I am as happy as a child that tomorrow I will return from my military hospital prison to my freedom and back to the troops, and I am already counting the hours.

If times weren't so sad, I'd gladly have gone home for 10 days to rest, but now I don't want to.

I only fear that peace will not come here all too soon, unless the enemy proposes terms.

Otherwise, we'll hopefully not agree to it!" I met up with Lieutenant Enderle again at the division headquarters in St.

Sauveur.

I was greeted as one who had risen from the dead.

My position had since been filled by someone else.

The noble General von Nagel had to leave us during these difficult days.

He had been appointed commander of the 2nd

Bavarian

Division, a position he was to retain as commander in peacetime.

Thus, in its hour of greatest need, the division was deprived of its universally respected and beloved leader.

It could hardly be said that the War Ministry's decision to change commanders at this very moment was a fortunate one.

I consoled myself, however, with the thought that I myself would not be on the staff much longer.

During my last leave in Munich, I had visited the personnel officer of the War Ministry, Major von Kiesser, who, at my request, promised me that I would be assigned as battalion commander in my old regiment on December 1, 1918.

I had long been longing to return to my regiment.

Major General von Zöllner had been appointed division commander in place of General von Nagel.

The new man was in many ways the opposite of Nagel and therefore failed to win the hearts of the members of his staff.

My hope of having overcome the flu was not fulfilled.

I was able to stay on my feet for a few days, then I collapsed again.

I couldn't go on.

Since the division had begun a rapid retreat toward Brussels, I was a burdensome appendage to the staff and a constant nuisance.

Under no circumstances did I want to return to the military hospital, so I requested and was granted ten days' leave to Munich.

On the day of my departure, the newly arrived commander of the 28th

Infantry Regiment brought news of the revolution in Munich.

We thought the news was false and didn't want to believe it; yet we were ashamed before our Prussian comrades on our staff that such reports about Bavaria were even possible.

The quartermaster, Lieutenant Weber, had taken it upon himself to take Lieutenant Enderle and me to Brussels.

On the way there, we stopped at the estate of a Belgian nobleman, where the 2nd

staff had taken up quarters.

The news of the revolution in Bavaria had meanwhile been confirmed, and to this had been added the news of the Emperor's abdication.

His Majesty the Emperor is always accused of having abandoned the army.

The army has buried its sorrow over the Emperor's decision to relinquish supreme command deep in its heart.

However, we front-line soldiers emphatically deny any non-combatant the right to criticize this action of our supreme commander.

Under constitutional law, as German Emperor, he did only what was required of him by the Constitution: as a constitutional monarch, he followed the well-founded advice of his responsible advisors, above all Field Marshal von Hindenburg, to make the sacrifice of his person "to avoid a civil war." 69 At the Grand Headquarters, it was precisely His Majesty the Emperor who, to the very end, was determined to fight and resist, and who also 95

His Majesty the Emperor, who was determined to the very end to fight and resist, and who did not shy away from

Only a very few loyalists, especially younger officers, remained with him.

Only a very few loyalists, especially younger officers, remained with him. 1 The Rohr assault battalion, which had been brought in to protect the Emperor, was, as the Field Marshal reported to His Majesty, no longer to be deployed. * In truth, however, he had been forbidden to use the water. A colonel of the General Staff, who on the decisive 7th

November, took the floor unasked, stood before his Emperor and King, and lamented that he could not enforce the oath of allegiance with a pistol since he had appeared without water, and was subsequently forced to leave the session "for indiscipline," is today also one of the outcasts of the new Germany.

The Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces did not seize dictatorial power and override the constitution, but subordinated his will to the so-called "constitution."

We soldiers regret this; but do the others have a right to criticize?

The Versassungsmeiers, who are and always have been the most zealous guardians and defenders of this official "public good"—would they not do well to remain silent?

We were all deeply shaken.

F.

A vein within us snapped.

All the more grateful were we for the noble tact of our landlord, who was a true friend to us in these difficult hours.

He knew as well as we did that his estate would have to provide shelter to enemy troops for only a few more days, then his homeland would be lost; yet he took pride in offering us Germans—who were sick in body and broken in spirit—a place of refuge. When we arrived in Brussels, the red flags of the revolution were flying there.

Trains of rear-area soldiers and a jeering rabble poured through the streets toward the city.

My homeland was on this day fully mobilized in full military formation, and I stood there freely, observing the commotion; no one bothered me.

A few soldiers—about 50 of them—performed the prescribed honors; only when they were lined up in formation did one see mostly supply troops, no regular soldiers.

Urli i l 5 5 erung Brüfiels was naturally overjoyed at the German I spent the night in the officers' hotel at B b near a N station and secured a nice spot the next 8 3 ag on the through train to Munich.

The train was overcrowded; mostly deserters who had been hanging around in Brussels, then rear-area soldiers, but also front-line fighters who could no longer find their units, or—la guerre est finie—were marching home on their own.

ST 70 In my compartment, besides Lieutenant Enderle, sat a Prussian General Staff officer who was traveling to Strasbourg and, being a cautious man, had removed his epaulets, as well as three older soldiers.

One of them had proudly removed his black-white-red cockade and was ranting about the "Prussians."

He was a staunch Bavarian.

At first he tried to peddle some nonsensical drivel that he must have gleaned from the most obscure Bavarian press; but I soon set him straight that his remarks were utter nonsense.

He then resigned himself to it and fell silent.

Otherwise, it was evident throughout the entire train that even among the most harried soldiers, the military spirit was still in their bones.

Everyone willingly made room when I walked down the aisle and helped me get on and off.

It did not occur to anyone to bother me.

In this sense, an incident that occurred during the train's stop in Liège was quite amusing.

There, a supply train was standing on a side track.

Most of the passengers on our train climbed onto the supply train and helped themselves to hardtack.

The soldiers sitting in my compartment watched sadly, but didn't dare to join in the looting in front of us officers.

Since I felt sorry for them, I allowed them to take a few portions of rusks as well.

But now came the best part: the first large sack of rusks that came into our car, the "looters" brought into my compartment and placed at my disposal.

I felt like a real bandit chief.

I thanked them, but I really had to laugh at this attitude of our soldiers.

The "hatred of the officers," which was so often talked about, surely couldn't have been that great if even on such occasions the principle of loyalty prevailed.

Another small, telling incident occurred: a soldier sitting in the compartment with me had lost his bayonet.

He was quite embarrassed when I confronted him about it.

And so he decided to steal someone else's.

He set out on a raid and soon returned proudly with the sidearm he had captured.

Perhaps an hour had passed when two burly fellows, who had searched all the compartments, also flung open our car door.

Triumphantly, one of them took the stolen sidearm, whereupon they both pounced on the assassin and, despite my protests and intervention, beat him mercilessly.

Then both of them left, cursing and shouting loudly.

Half an hour later, there was another knock on the compartment door.

The two soldiers who had caused the earlier scandal entered, standing at attention, and in well-chosen words apologized for the unmilitary behavior they had previously displayed toward me!

The journey through Alsace-Lorraine took place in glorious autumn weather.

The people greeted us just as they had in 1914.

Hands waved, handkerchiefs fluttered, and the soldiers saluted and waved back.

Tears welled up in my eyes.

The simple face of the common man saw only one thing before him: now there will be peace again, and all hardship has come to an end.

In this sense, the revolution had “triumphed.” 25 The war was over.

I was reminded again of a remark made by a young cavalry officer from the staff of the 6th

Division, which he had already coined back in October 192: “How much longer is this ridiculous business actually going to last?” Whenever things got rough out there, that saying came to mind and restored my sense of humor.

Today it came to mind again, but I could no longer feel happy.

I was too overwhelmed by disgust, bitterness, and shame.

In Munich, immediately after getting off the train, a tall sergeant with a red armband approached me, stood at attention, and said: “I would ask Captain to remove the black-white-red cockade, as otherwise you will not be allowed off the platform.” “This is how far we’ve come!” he added quietly and wistfully.

There was no point in resisting; on the platform lurked the Red Army, with whom I could not and would not quarrel.

So I took the cockade off my cap and tucked it away.

Unchallenged, I left the platform of red Munich.

I vowed to myself that I would personally make amends for the humiliation inflicted upon the black-white-red cockade.

I arrived home to my loved ones in the best of health.

Under my mother’s care, I recovered visibly and slowly regained my strength.

Once I felt better, I took short walks through my hometown.

But then I put on my uniform, pinned the black-white-red cockade back onto my cap, and made my way to the War Ministry—or, as it was officially called, the “Ministry of Military Affairs.”

On the way and on the tram, I was often stared at and greeted; the majority of the soldiers, albeit hesitantly, snapped to attention in a military salute.

An officer with a cockade and epaulets was an unusual sight in Munich in those days.

At the War Ministry, I sought out a few acquaintances and inquired above all about whether there had been any resistance from this office against the revolt of the 7th

The overall picture was not an uplifting one: people had smiled and ignored warnings, had then been taken by surprise, and were now resigning themselves to the situation.

At the War Ministry, Captain Graf, a clever and energetic officer, seems to me to have been preparing serious resistance; his efforts would have been greater had he, despite the indifference and opposition from above, acted on his own initiative—5—just as he had intended. Of course, the last Bavarian Minister of War, the successor to Colonel Baron von Kreß, cannot evade full responsibility for the success of the coup. - 72 In Munich, the military authorities had surrendered without a fight on the very streets.

It set the precedent for the most shameful surrender of all time, in which the military commanders of the home army virtually outdid one another in cowardice, indecision, and lack of resistance, in order to outdo the fear-stricken civilian bureaucracy. “No needless bloodshed!” “No use of weapons!” These were the hollow slogans with which these uniformed men believed they could cloak their disloyalty toward the Supreme Commander, their culpable dereliction of duty, and their lack of character toward the fighting army at the front.

In disgrace and shame, the responsible commanders surrendered to the mutinous mob and slunk away.

No Royal Guard, no Regiment Royal Allemand stood up to the revolting hordes, as they had once done in Paris in 1789, preferring to be cut to pieces rather than retreat from the square.

The leaders of the French Revolution issued fiery calls to arms with the water cannons.

The revolutionaries cast aside the weapons and denounced cowardice and treason.

On December 7, 1918, the “Council of Plenipotentiaries” issued the following decree with the force of law for the Reich (R.

G.

B.

No. 6578): “All investigations shall be suppressed insofar as they concern crimes of desertion and cowardice, etc.” Truly—one cannot call the mutiny on the home front a revolution; it was the most shameful submission of a system that had chosen trembling cowards and old men as its pillars, to the command and roar of the street.

Lieutenant Colonel von Sonnenburg, whom I asked during my visit to the War Ministry how things stood now and what was being prepared to overthrow the Red regime, replied to me quite agitatedly that, for God’s sake, nothing should be undertaken now and that everything must be allowed to develop calmly.

I could not shake the impression that this turn of events was not unwelcome to him.

So I took my leave with the feeling that nothing could be done in this house.

In the following days, a battalion of the Infantry Life Guard Regiment arrived in Munich.

I stood on the station square: tears filled my eyes as I watched the magnificent field soldiers return.

They must have been kicking ass and certainly weren't letting themselves be beaten down.

A few days later, I heard that this battalion, too, had fallen apart.

The best soldiers had been quickly discharged to their home regions, a measure that the Councils had successfully implemented across all field units.

Then I knew I had no business staying in Munich any longer.

I decided to return to the troops.

I couldn't get back with my ticket; the Soldiers' Council wouldn't let me through.

Then I heard that the Ministry of War was sending officers to the frontline divisions as reconnaissance agents to inform the command posts about the situation.

I immediately volunteered and traveled on December 4

December to the General Command of the J.

Bayer.

Reserve Corps and from there to the 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division in Elberfeld-Barmen.

Little had changed in my division's staff.

Discipline was still the same as among the troops.

The new commander, General von Zöllner, had not won any more favor; my successor as second general staff officer had been dismissed, and I was able to resume my former duties.

Soon we were loaded onto transport, and under the smart black-white-red and white-blue flags we drove back home.

In Landshut, Lower Bavaria, the division staff disembarked.

At the train station, we were greeted by an inevitable soldiers' council, which, however, found little support.

The disbandment proceedings continued for only a short while longer, and then the 12th Battalion was also disbanded.

Bavarian

Infantry Division.

According to my demobilization orders, I served as adjutant of the 11th

Bavarian

Infantry Brigade.

In a reflective mood, I traveled from Landshut to Munich after having said a heartfelt goodbye to all my friends and comrades.

The war was over.

I had been a Royal Officer.

For 8 years of peace and 5 years of war, I had served my king faithfully.

The king had been deposed by traitors, abandoned by his own officers and closest advisors.

Thus, he demanded an oath of loyalty from all his officers.

I appreciated this kind gesture from my high commander, but for a moment I was unsure whether I would keep my oath to the king until my death.

II.

From the Sash to the Swastika 13.

As a sign of the councils.

On January 2, 1919, I took up duty as adjutant of the 11th

Infantry Brigade.

My commander, General Sämmer, who had long served as commander of the Bavarian

Reserve Infantry Regiment 10, had come through the revolution with his integrity intact and was not willing to compromise in the slightest in his now more modest position.

The position of 1st

brigade clerk was held by Lieutenant Preußer.

I could understand that he did not feel particularly comfortable in his position.

Since I placed great importance at that time on handling and processing all matters personally, little independent work remained for him.

At the same time, he had to watch as stupid and incompetent loudmouths and screamers in positions of authority made themselves at home and played a role.

Measured by this standard, I did not hold against him the subtle resentment he occasionally let slip, that the leadership of the brigade would have been fully sufficient through him alone.

Of course, the regulation soldiers' council was not missing either.

It consisted of three generally decent men.

One of them, a non-commissioned officer who had returned with the field regiment, actually performed quite well within his limited scope.

From the very beginning, I was strongly opposed to the demands of the soldiers' councils.

The Supreme Army Command, which lacked inner strength due to Ludendorff's arrangement and had not exactly been well advised by the officers it had brought in, dealt the heaviest blow to the army's structure by establishing the soldiers' councils.

The fact that, under the banner of the "Revolution," workers' and soldiers' councils were formed at home and in the rear according to the Russian-Jewish model would not have meant all that much.

They would have been swept away like chaff by the returning front-line army.

But I have never been able to understand, much less come to terms with, the fact that the Supreme Commander of the Field Army, the Field Marshal, also introduced soldiers' councils for the front-line army and thereby legalized them in the first place.

This effectively undermined the resistance of all those who remained loyal—and 75 percent had remained well-disposed at the front.

It is impossible to imagine how things would have developed without this inglorious capitulation to the Red mob. The "level-headed" will no doubt still praise this measure today, just as the notes may still be thanked for it today.

For it is this that made their rule possible and consolidated it.

Of course, the soldiers' councils, which had to be elected in the field among the troops, were often decent fellows.

But that didn't help at all; for as soon as the troops arrived home, they were pushed aside by the agitators from the ranks of the local councils.

The soldiers' councils of the frontline units usually had no interest in this business; they therefore gladly and willingly ceded the field to the home councils.

A striking and telling sign that the councils were not elected by the soldiers but "made" and simply installed was that in many cases it was precisely those of higher rank—who lacked any sense of solidarity with the troops, and who had even been known for mistreating their subordinates—who now

became the soldiers' "councils."

Significantly, a similar conclusion is reached by examining the military backgrounds of most of the officers who discovered their "red hearts" after November 1918.

The mention of Deimling's name should suffice in this context.

When the councils went too far, a notorious decree was issued for Banern by the Minister of Military Affairs, Roßhaupter, and the Provisional State Soldiers' Council.

This "Provisional Ordinance for the Soldiers' Councils of December 13,

December 1918, which, if I am correctly informed, had been drafted by First Lieutenant Schemmel, laid out with ministerial precision all the duties, rights, fees, structure, and the election of the councils.

Even though many soldiers' councils confidently disregarded these regulations, they nevertheless, on the whole, did good.

In any case, I welcomed them as appropriate and was quite grateful to the author for enabling me to wage the fight against the soldiers' councils, so to speak, using their own weapons.

And there was ample opportunity for battle in Ingolstadt.

Not with the soldiers' councils in the brigade staff; these limited themselves to reading through and countersigning issued orders and did not disrupt the conduct of business in any way.

I had assigned them the specific task of handling complaints from non-commissioned officers and enlisted men.

They would sit outside in the office for a long time, deliberating, and then they usually decided to seek my advice.

When there was a knock at my door, I already knew in advance that I would again be asked to make the difficult decision.

I was happy to do so, because I was a stickler for order in this regard.

Otherwise, generally no one liked to come into my room.

I remember that one day a member of the garrison soldiers' council came to Deputy Officer Preußer and complained vehemently about me.

I was behaving provocatively in Ingolstadt, riding with the court with the red 76 stripes, even wearing the blue frock coat and the black-white-red cockade—that had to stop now, and so on.

Preußer simply replied calmly that I was sitting in the next room and he should just go in and tell me that himself, preferably right away.

"I'd rather not do that," said the "Counselor," and left again.

I was on “intimate” terms with the Garrison Soldiers’ Council.

A motley crew of red and even redder patriots, of whom the most radical were still my favorites.

But he was undisputedly the bearer of authority in Ingolstadt.

There was, in fact, also a commander of the fortress in the city, who was supposed to represent the highest authority.

But he worked so harmoniously with the councils that hardly anything happened other than what they wanted.

It may be that some circles who “love peace” credit him with this as a merit; for what the general sought to achieve, he did achieve: Ingolstadt was spared major disturbances.

But precisely for that reason, the revolution not only succeeded but became a state of affairs that still exists and is entrenched today, because the responsible rulers, for the sake of dear peace, “in the interest of the cause” and “to prevent worse things,” made peace with the revolutionaries and made governing so easy for them.

In this overall assessment, I am attacking the general as a type, not as a person; for no one will dispute that he can appeal to higher authorities, and that he received the applause of official dignitaries in black and white.

I do not begrudge him this well-deserved recognition.

Another question, of course, is whether the conduct of this high-ranking officer, on the whole, has benefited or harmed the reputation of the German officer.

I happen to hold a different opinion on this matter.

And this view is based on a series of incidents, of which I wish to highlight only one to illustrate the circumstances of that time.

Before the election in January 1919, a demonstration march took place—ostensibly “for peace and order,” but in reality to glorify the revolution.

The red flag flew at the front.

The procession gathered in front of Kavalier Spreti and then, led by the commander, set off through the city.

The officers had been ordered to participate by the commandant’s office.

None of the field officers participated.

I watched the gathering and the march from the windows of our old officers’ mess hall with a few young officers and felt ashamed.

Also for the general, who, despite never having been in the field, was awarded the E.

K.

II.

As much as the general, on the one hand, maintained close, almost friendly relations with the soldiers' councils, he did not, on the other hand, fail to emphasize his high standing to the officers and insist on his superior position.

Admittedly, his behavior was generally and openly rejected by these circles.

Unfortunately, however, the sense of solidarity among the officers—namely those on leave—was not strong enough for them to form a united force.

I am still convinced today that, given the situation in Ingolstadt—and it must have been similar elsewhere outside Munich—had the officers joined forces and formed an armed company, they would have had the entire garrison under their control.

They would have found enough allies: there were plenty of fine fellows among the citizens of Ingolstadt, and among the non-commissioned officers and enlisted men there were enough loyal and well-meaning soldiers.

The chairmen of the Ingolstadt Officers' Association, First Lieutenant Lehmann and First Lieutenant (Reserve) Beckert from Nuremberg, were undoubtedly capable men who were fully committed to the cause and also found the resolve for special undertakings.

But the majority of the officers were weary and unwilling to take any initiative.

Together with a few friends—among whom I would particularly highlight Captain Regler of the 13th

Infantry Regiment, Captain Schreyer, and First Lieutenant Bergen of my regiment, I repeatedly attempted to make advances.

But we were unable to achieve anything.

At the time, I shared a rather cozy bachelor apartment with Captain Regler.

Apart from the fact that our landlady, in view of the political situation, considered it her proletarian duty to thoroughly scold me, we spent many pleasant hours together.

In the evenings, many regimental comrades, including the strapping Lieutenant Pius Hammerschmid and the battle-tested Lieutenant Max Vogler, would often gather at our home.

Across from our apartment lay Major Hofmann's beautiful estate.

How he managed to get out of English captivity so quickly remains a fine mystery.

In any case, he managed even that.

No sooner had he arrived in Ingolstadt than he immediately threw himself into political activity.

At all the local meetings held at that time, including the Socialist ones, he took the floor, recounted his experiences in prison, and called on voters to adopt a patriotic mindset; naturally, he also represented the activist faction within the Officers' Association.

I still remember a remark he once made on his way home from an Ossizier meeting that had dealt with the councilors: "We'll still pave the streets with these people's heads." A few months later, the Hamburg Spartacists had the misfortune of getting to know this unfriendly gentleman a little better.

I would like to include here a couple of leaflets that I wrote and distributed at the time, because they most clearly reflect my attitude back then.

They all date from February 1919! 1.

Sleepers, awaken! (abridged.) We live in a fairy-tale-like dream state: Besides cowardice, boundless indifference is the most striking trait of the German citizen.

No outcry against the ongoing enslavement, no fine surge of national pride, no stirring of the instinct for self-preservation; dull and unresisting, we surrender to fate.

It is as if a sleep-like numbness were restricting our free will.

We are hurtling into the abyss, and everyone is asleep.

I cry out to you, you sleeping Germans: wake up! 2.

Quousque tandem Catilina? (How long yet?).

If any state at all bears the blame for the war—I am of the opinion that the war had to come, just as a cleansing thunderstorm must follow a stifling, stormy heat—then only a comprehensive, comparative examination of all state archives by experts

This, which will be reserved for a later, more impartial time, may yield points of reference.

Pulling a few documents out of the jumble is bound to give a skewed picture. 5 With the exception of Mr. Kurt Eisner, who has appointed himself Prime Minister of Bavaria, everyone in the world is aware of this.

A peculiarity, of course, is the attempt—possible only in Germany, in no other country in the world—to soil one's own nest.

It was left to him, the foreigner, to go out into the world with a few loose documents in hand, bellowing about Germany's guilt in the war.

Both official and unofficial sources immediately condemned the act.

His 1 ebrandmarft.

But the enemy's greedy ear seized upon his confession of guilt with relish: the entire guilty German people were to suffer even harsher punishment and penance for it! And the "idealist in the garb of a ruler" had expected, for his undignified "Pater peccavi," the carrot of forgiving benevolence instead of the whip!

If Germany, after many years of war, succumbed to a world of enemies, it did not thereby lose its honor; but the leaders who placed themselves at the forefront in misfortune expose it to contempt through their conduct.

But this is the line that the revolutionary hero rarely crosses, and thus, from the very first day he comes to power, he already carries within him the seed of his downfall: the leap from revolutionary to statesman.

The two cannot be reconciled.

If he wishes to hold onto the power he has seized, he must forget the revolutionary and be nothing but a statesman.

Ever since Eisner rode in on the "revolution," he has not ceased to fight against and tear down the old order, as it were to defend himself; he remained a revolutionary: he built nothing, achieved nothing as a statesman; thus his fate is sealed; he may hold out for a few more days, but his downfall is inevitable.
3.

Soldiers! (Abridged.) When, during the Thirty Years' War, the Landsknechts feared that their battle-tested and universally beloved commander Wallenstein intended to break his loyalty to the Emperor, they deserted him.

Despite the lawlessness that had gradually taken hold among the soldiers during that long, wretched war, the oath the mercenaries—feared by friend and foe alike—had sworn to their emperor remained sacred.

At the very hour when the fatherland was in its most desperate need, you betrayed your emperor and king and broke the oath you had sworn before God.

On this day, God has forsaken our fatherland and cast us into the deepest disgrace.

The enemy has made use of vile traitors and demagogues.

He paid them in peace and in war, those venal traitors and scoundrels, = to poison your minds.

That they might sow discord and mistrust and thereby paralyze the spirit of the hitherto blameless, valiant soldiers; he paid them during the Revolution so that they might just barely bring about the overthrow before France and England finally collapsed; he still pays them today so that anarchy may continue to reign in Germany and we must accept every peace to which the arrogant, merciless enemy seeks to force us.

They, who were hired with enemy money, on whom the blood of your brave comrades fallen in battle

sticks, who have the desolate plight of our war veterans and the lawless misery of our prisoners of war on their conscience, who are to blame for the fact that thousands of brave comrades are now perishing in Russia and the East with a curse on their homeland, these Jews and foreigners now rule over you—admittedly quite differently from Kalser and König, who at all times had to answer to the people for their deeds; no, with dictatorial, arbitrary power, without having to answer to anyone.

Demand this accountability; make them give an account of what they have done; then perhaps your eyes will finally be opened to the hands of what wretched swindlers the good Michel has fallen into!

A dozen weeks have now passed since the revolution.

What has this upheaval brought us? Is it perhaps better now?

The Last Judgment will decide; history will one day teach you how terribly you were deceived, lied to, and betrayed.

You have heroically endured four of the most terrible years of war, both on the battlefield and at home.

Did you see the Emperor in 1914, and did you see him in 1918, his hair grayed with worry? Did you see our King, how, despite his advanced age, he kept going out to his troops so he could look them in the eye himself?

And be honest with yourselves: does it not move your hearts when, after days of terrible fighting, your king or the Emperor greets you and personally presents you with your well-deserved decorations?

And would you not have borne the cross with greater pride and joy if the Emperor had bestowed it upon you?

Just lie to yourselves and deny it; just keep claiming that it lifts your spirits more deeply when a paid Jew or a shameless demagogue shouts at you and praises your prowess!

Now, of course, it’s different; loyalty and a respectful attitude are a crime; one must now revile the emperor and the king, the church and the army—in short, everything that used to be good and worthy—otherwise one is a traitor to the fatherland.

So that no one might even think that the others—oh, rulers and dictators—who treat you like dogs without your noticing, have snatched away all your hard-won rights, you traitors to the fatherland!

You did get “freedom” in return, after all!

Yes, which ones?

For the fact that we are now slaves and vassals of England and France and, like ill-mannered boys, must obediently do everything, absolutely everything.

Whatever they command us with a kick.

And how could it have been any different?

France was at the end of its strength: it could go on no longer and had to make peace at any cost that winter.

England was facing the gravest supply problems and had already given up on continuing the war.

Ask the prisoners of war, the few who return starved, about the conditions in France and England in November 1918!

Read the statements of English and French statesmen and generals!

Why, then, was the armistice so bitter and humiliating for us?

Because they had to destroy us at the very moment when we were weak and could not take advantage of their weakness. 2 You front-line soldiers have truly done your duty.

And even if it was uncertain in the final days of the war, were you not, in your conviction, the better army?

How few of you there were, how meager our artillery, how few our pilots, how poor our trucks, how sparse our rations; and yet you always fought like heroes!

And when, despite a lack of relief and in the depths of exhaustion, you went into battle, were you superior, or were the others?

You managed it, and victory would have been yours as early as 1918 after fierce struggle!

But then the others, the traitors to the fatherland, would have lost their game; if Germany had won, it would have been the end of their flourishing wheat!

The traitors to the fatherland, the dishonorable, the deserters, those punished for cowardice would have faced their punishment despite a hundred amnesties; your just wrath would have demanded its due, the scoundrels who cared nothing for your lives or those of your comrades, who betrayed you to the enemy, defected to him to fight for him—there my comrades gather, there you must go and shoot, and you may kill a hundred of my brothers; you would have brought these scoundrels before the bar of justice, the cowards who sat at home and robbed you of your due, who enriched themselves through war profiteering—you would have demanded justice, punishment for them!

If you had returned home victorious, then you brave ones, who risked your lives a thousand times amid the roar of cannons, would have received your reward; you could have demanded your rights, and the cowards back home would have had to yield to your rightfully earned rights.

Then these men of honor, despite their cunning, would have miscalculated!

No, they said, we'll stab our brave army in the back; then Germany must collapse; then it won't matter anymore who was slain before the enemy; then these men will lose everything they possess; we'll be saved, and when everything collapses, we'll grab what we can and prepare our flight abroad.

Soldiers!

These brothers have already put their money in a safe place; they'll keep reaping as long as your wheat blooms, and when everything has been stolen from you, they'll flee.

Be on your guard!

Don't let them get away!

Demand responsibility, law, and justice!

Don't let yourselves be beguiled by slogans!

Demand facts!

Ask them what they have done!

And then judge them.

The will of the people is the highest will!

Then judge who is to blame for the fact that we Germans are now beaten and trampled upon by our hate-filled enemies, that we have become destitute and have soon lost everything!

At least save your honor, restore it, after you have broken before God the oath you solemnly swore! Atonement for your grave crime; only then is there a path from the deepest distress and shame to a slow recovery! Thus, in February 1919, I sought to work in an enlightening and combative manner in all circles accessible to me.

During this time, I became aware of the "Deutsche Zeitung" and was enthusiastic about the courageous writing style of its editor-in-chief, Wulle.

In February 1919, it was not easy to find a nationalist in Germany.

Of the Bavarian newspapers, one could really only read the "Bayer.

Kurier," which used a manly tone.

I forgave him many things because he was so courageous in difficult times.

In the end, however, it really became unbearable as his agitation against everything that was patriotic became increasingly unrestrained.

Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 81 The first issue of *Die Rote Hand* (The Red Hand), published by Nedis lawyer Kohl and a few brave friends, caused a sensation.

In a sarcastic manner, these bold men set out to point out the absurdities of the so-called Revolution and its rulers. One day, Mr. Kurt Eisner also graced Ingolstadt with a visit and delivered a provocative speech against the authorities at the Pioneer Barracks.

I was seething with rage and, in uniform and with a riding crop in hand, made my way to the garrison

soldiers' council in the Lörden's den.

I demanded that he protect the officers from Mr. Eisner's insults.

The room where the soldiers' council "reigned" was packed with Red soldiers.

Immediately, one of them—to whom the others then loudly agreed—took my side and said: "He's right, you can tell he was out there; he won't put up with anything!" etc.

My side had won; the soldiers' councils decided to send a delegation to Minister Roßhaupter in Munich the next day to take a stand against Eisner's remarks.

As far as I know, they kept their word.

A heart-wrenching memorial service was the funeral service in the cathedral on the occasion of the passing of Her Majesty the Queen.

The entire local contingent of the Royal 10th

Infantry Regiment of the King, took part en masse in uniform and helmet, as did a great many non-commissioned officers and soldiers and a large portion of the Ingolstadt population.

The many uniforms on the street once again presented Ingolstadt with a scene reminiscent of peacetime.

However, one could see in the faces of many the special pride they felt in being able to express, alongside their mourning for the late Queen,

The commander did not attend the ceremony.

The commander did not attend the ceremony.

The duty offered little of interest.

I saw one of my main tasks as applying to the Deputy General Command for the dismissal of a number of superfluous officers on leave of absence who were doing absolutely nothing.

Many against their will; for they had, in part, settled quite comfortably with their families in Ingolstadt and the surrounding area, did absolutely nothing, and were rightly of the opinion that they would never again have it so good in their entire lives.

One of those who enjoyed this noble time was a First Lieutenant of the

R., whom I already remembered fondly from the field, when in September 1914, instead of advancing with his platoon to the attack, he tried to slip away into the bushes.

He had once again tried to make a run for it with his pistol.

Even during the arduous march to Metz in mid-September 1914, I had to pull him down from a

baggage wagon, where he had retreated instead of marching in formation.

He soon returned home and became a figurehead of the garrison army.

In the replacement battalion, he became, of all things, a court officer, and from then on was, of course, irreplaceable and no longer available for the front.

Even in February 1919, he still considered himself indispensable as a judicial officer.

I soon discovered him and recommended him for discharge.

He was dismayed to hear this news, which was to bring an abrupt end to his peaceful existence, and complained about me to the soldiers' council!

I was genuinely delighted when, a few days later, the soldiers' council conveyed the complaint to me.

My commander, General Sämmer, now took up the matter.

I have rarely heard such a thunderous outburst directed at an officer as this one, which caused the soldiers from the entire barracks to gather.

The end result was that the commander shouted a thunderous "Get out!" at him and showed him the door. This decision also met with the full approval of the soldiers' councils, for whom a non-commissioned officer's complaint against another non-commissioned officer to the soldiers' council was, after all, a bit too much.

Relations with the fortress command became increasingly unpleasant.

The commander, along with his garrison council, meddled in matters that were none of his business and issued direct orders to the regiments; the brigade resisted this quite firmly and rejected the command's demands.

Complaints to the Deputy General Command were unsuccessful.

One crow pecked out the other's eye.

Then an event occurred that pushed the tension to the breaking point.

By decree of the Ministry of War, the formation of civil defense units was ordered.

Since I saw in this an opportunity to improve conditions and, above all, to recruit more suitable soldiers and to remove unfit elements, I set about implementing this decree with the utmost urgency and speed.

On the 10th

and 13th

Infantry Regiments, recruitment offices were opened and appeals were issued to the older and younger men of the 10th and 13th regiments.

Everything seemed to be going smoothly; the troop soldiers' councils had been won over to the cause.

Then the garrison soldiers' council recognized the danger threatening it.

At its instigation, the commander prevented the recruitment and the formation of the new full army.

This intervention was so outrageous that I informed my commander that I would henceforth refuse to cooperate further with the Red Command.

General Sämmer resigned as commander of the brigade, and the commanders of the 10th

and the 13th

Infantry Regiments refused to take over his post under these circumstances and immediately resigned.

I therefore issued an order on February 21, 1919, I issued an order to the units and administrative offices subordinate to the Brigade and the Inspectorate of Military Penal Institutions, in which, after a sharp reckoning with the Fortress Command, I suspended operations at the Brigade and directed the regiments and administrative offices to report directly to the Deputy General Command.

I sent a copy of the order to the Fortress Command, the Deputy General Command, and the Ministry of War, to the latter with a request for a decision. 9 83 The order hit like a bomb.

That very same day, members of the Soldiers' Council from Nuremberg arrived and, together with some members of the garrison's Soldiers' Council, came to see me.

After I had rejected their demand that I rescind the order, pointing out that I was authorized to issue it under the applicable regulations, a long political dispute ensued with the councils hostile to me, which took us into all sorts of areas.

These were by no means inexperienced fighters who had made themselves at home in my territory.

I probably earned their respect by declaring myself a loyal officer of my king and telling them that they would surely despise me if I were to oppose them differently as an officer of the King's Regiment.

In the end, they invited me to drive with them to Munich, since I insisted that Minister Roßhaupter make the decision personally.

I thanked them for the invitation to ride along; however, we agreed to meet the next day at 11 a.m. in the minister's anteroom.

The next morning I drove to Munich.

I was already looking forward to the upcoming discussions and was determined to bring about a clear statement by committing myself fully.

Then the train suddenly stopped behind Dachau.

Everyone had to get off; train service to Munich had been suspended; the Eisner train had fallen victim to Count Arco's bullet.

I then walked from the suburb to Munich; the occasion was certainly worth a stroll, though I was unable to gain entry to the ministry.

All officers were barred from entering the building that day.

Only the civil servants were allowed to continue working—for the "cause," of course!

I was therefore unable to meet with my friends from the Nuremberg and Ingolstadt Soldiers' Councils.

So I went to the apartment of the senior department head at the Ministry, State Councilor von Köberle, and presented the matter to him, adding that, in view of the developments in Munich, I would naturally refrain from seeking an apology from the Ministry of War.

General von Köberle suggested to me that operations at the brigade should resume and that an immediate agreement with the fortress command should be sought.

Given the situation, he could not offer any other advice.

Since I happened to be in Munich, I took the opportunity to visit Major General von Losso w, the 1st

Chairman of the Economic Association of Bavarian Officers.

The general had recently issued a circular regarding the officers' strike and was regarded as a man who defended the demands of his profession with particular energy and determination.

The impression I had upon my first meeting with this officer confirmed his reputation, and I left his apartment satisfied and encouraged.

But in Ingolstadt, the events of February 21

February had not passed without leaving their mark.

The Garrison Council convened a protest meeting in the great hall of the General Officers' Society, at which the commander naturally also appeared and loudly expressed his indignation at the "cowardly murderer."

A number of officers.

who had now had enough, including the upright Major Baron von Lösselholz, who had already sharply opposed him before the meeting, left the hall in outrage and, of course, resigned from this "army."

However, after my fruitless outburst, I was all the more determined not to give up the fight.

I discussed the situation in Ingolstadt with my commander, General Sämmer.

Until then, the brigade clerk had been handling the affairs.

On March 1, 1919, I resumed my duties as adjutant, although the fortress command and the garrison council opposed this.

On March 5, 1919, General Sämmer resumed command of the brigade.

The month of March passed without any notable events.

The security companies stationed in Ingolstadt, which without exception had capable leaders (Captain Regler, Captain Besch, First Lieutenant Bergen, Second Lieutenant Öfterreiher), were, by a lenient standard, of limited use; but not much could be expected of them, and nothing special could be hoped for.

Thus, I resolved to seek a more promising military assignment elsewhere.

I therefore contacted a position in northern Germany.

I applied to a position in northern Germany that had been recommended to me, but received no reply.

Then I heard about the formation of a Bavarian Freikorps in Ohrdruf.

My decision was made quickly.

Since the Bavarian government had issued a ban on joining the corps, and the fortress command had taken a particular liking to me, I was careful to leave my previous post as unnoticed as possible.

I therefore took my leave only of my commander, General Sämmer, and Lieutenant Colonel Vogt, the commander of the 10th

Infantry Regiment, whom I held in high esteem for his wise and manly demeanor, especially in these miserable times, and said farewell to my brave and loyal Sergeant Weber, whose loyalty had, of course, never wavered for a moment.

Then I drove to Munich, said goodbye to my parents, and set off for Thuringia in civilian clothes.

Since the border was heavily guarded and the trains in particular were thoroughly searched by the soldiers' councils, I decided for the time being not to bring any uniforms with me and thus slipped through the checkpoint unscathed.

I can still see, as if it were today, the young, strapping lieutenant with the black-white-red cockade standing at the train station in Saalfeld, where he greeted me and the 85 other lucky ones who had managed to identify ourselves to him and informed us of our further destinations.

After a short train ride, a postal truck took us to our desired destination. 14.

Ohrdruf Only a few barracks at the Ohrdruf military training area were occupied by the "Bavarian Freikorps for Eastern Border Protection."

A small group of German soldiers had gathered there.

The closure of the border, the interception of many troops, and in many cases the arrest of individual officers and enlisted men traveling alone had made the formation of the Freikorps very difficult in March.

Nevertheless, by the end of that month, a small company had been formed from a number of determined officers (including, as the first, First Lieutenant Stred, Lieutenant Eder, Lieutenant von Stettner, Captain Frei≠ berr von Pranckh, Mafor Ritter von Hörauf, and Nittmeister Weln≠gart), students from Würzburg and Erlangen, and volunteers from all over Bavaria, a weak company was formed.

Upon my arrival, I immediately reported to the Freikorps' General Staff Officer, Major von Hörauf, my old regimental comrade and esteemed field superior, who, with his customary calm and composure, once again demonstrated his fine creative power here.

Since he also had a sufficient supply of the inevitable Virginians, without which one rarely saw him, he was in a cheerful mood.

The reunion was warm.

Major von Hörauf then directed me to report to the commander of the Freikorps, Colonel von Epp.

An elegant, chivalrous, and energetic officer greeted me, whose personality captivated me from the very first moment.

I could not have foreseen at the time that for many years I would become one of the closest aides to this noble and generous officer, whom the Emperor had awarded the Order of "Pour le Mérite"; but I knew from my first impression that I stood before a leader whose character repelled and shattered the errors and turmoil of the Revolution.

A few days after my arrival, a horde of Saxon Red soldiers attempted to attack the Freikorps headquarters.

Without hesitation, Colonel von Epp himself confronted the attackers and put the rabble to flight.

This was the man who had set himself the goal of restoring order in Bavaria as soon as possible.

The influx of volunteers, especially officers, increased noticeably in the first days of April.

I was originally supposed to take command of the officer company.

But since I initially had only my civilian clothes, that didn't work out.

So I was reassigned within the staff to the position that had been my special field of work in the field: the provisioning and equipping of the troops. 86 In this area, of course, there was work in abundance.

At first, we were starting from scratch.

I immediately set about determining the needs for clothing and equipment, water, horses, and vehicles, etc.

for the coming period, boarded the train to Weimar, and—through numerous discussions with the superior General Command in Lüttwitz—obtained full approval of my requests.

At short intervals, shipments of water, equipment, supplies, and horses now arrived in Ohrdruf.

The newly formed supply company had its hands full receiving the incoming shipments and distributing them to the troops.

The influx of volunteers had increased significantly, particularly after the proclamation of the Soviet Republic in Munich on April 7.

April.

After the Hossmann government even permitted recruitment for the corps, volunteers from all professions and all Bavarian districts rushed to join.

There were officers who voluntarily lined up as soldiers in the ranks, students, high school students, cadets, campaign soldiers of all ranks and branches, workers, farmers—all united and held together by a single thought and a single enthusiasm.

And if there was a soldierly community anywhere, it was here—one that looked only to its leader and obeyed him blindly.

Back home, there was no one left who represented any kind of leadership or authority.

The Hossmann government had fled from Munich to Bamberg and ruled there for those who, for lack of anything better, put up with it.

The Soviet Republic ruled in the capital!

Only the rabble and the dregs of society formed its entourage.

In short, let it be said to the many who have already forgotten it today that back then there was only one man on whose side Bavaria stood, and that was Colonel von Epp.

My brave stable boy had arrived in Ohrdruf very soon with my horse and a cart full of uniforms.

With the bearing and demeanor of a wild Spartan, he had successfully passed through the border checkpoints after lively altercations.

He was all the prouder now to be a proper Freikorps soldier.

My dear brigade clerk, my son-in-law, had even shown up with a typewriter.

Now I brought in more loyal helpers and friends.

The proven field quartermaster Seber was happy to join us and soon brought energy and order to the corps’ entire food supply system.

Of course, I did not want to be without my adjutant, Reserve Lieutenant Bergmann, any longer.

However, he was only able to take leave on May 1

, but then stayed with me for a long time.

Immediately upon receiving the news, Major Hofmann and Major Baron von Lösselholz of the 13th

Infantry Regiment arrived at the troops and became valuable collaborators to the newly formed corps.

Thus, the middle of April arrived.

The small group from the first days of April had grown into a strong battalion of 87 men with support troops.

On April 10,

April, the strength of the officers was 200, that of the enlisted men 500.

On the 14th

April, an order arrived from the Ministry of National Defense demanding the acceleration of the formation of the Freikorps and readiness for deployment in Bavaria.

By special decree, the corps was given the designation: “Bavarian Protection Corps.”

The volunteers, especially the students, could hardly contain themselves any longer.

The unfavorable news from home and the failures of the Bavarian government troops at Dachau and Freising meant that their restless drive to act could no longer be contained.

But the resolve of the battle-hungry men was first put to a brief test.

The coming days were devoted to thorough training and instruction of the troops.

Equipment was supplemented as far as possible, and the “mobilization” was completed.

On April 22,

April, the first transport finally left Ohrdruf, with further transports following in the coming days.

A gathering detachment remained behind at the military training area, to be brought up as soon as possible.

The convoy did not go to Bamberg, as we had originally assumed, but took a wide detour around Vahern via Stuttgart to Ulm.

Here the transports were unloaded; the largest part of the corps took up quarters at Wilhelmsburg, the

staffs in the city.

The accommodations were poorly organized and had to be sorted out first.

Large segments of the local population were not sympathetic to the Bavarian protection corps; some gatherings of Spartacists had to be dispersed, and some confrontations had to be repelled with force, in some cases even with water cannons.

Some of the young men even paid for their attacks with their lives.

In Neu-Ulm, the situation was even worse than in Alm.

But the Bavarian volunteers were not to be trifled with; the shrewd locals soon realized this and stopped their inappropriate pranks.

Enlistment in the corps now increased sharply.

Hundreds of volunteers arrived from Franconia and southern Bavaria.

Over 300 men arrived from Ohrdruf, and over 200 men arrived from Bamberg with a hundred horses.

Thus, the Rifle Corps was now able to strengthen itself considerably; a separate administrative staff, which was to remain in Ulm for the time being as the Corps advanced, was established.

The chain of command and reporting relationships remained unregulated for the time being.

The Bavarian government harbored a certain fear of the “reactionary” rifle corps, while Colonel von Epp, for his part, had little inclination to be placed under the command of men who had thrown every obstacle in his path and fought him with the utmost ferocity.

The Bavarian government had initially appointed Major von Seisser as commander; shortly thereafter, a Bavarian High Command was formed in Ingolstadt.

Colonel von Epp traveled in a special train from Ulm to Ingolstadt, accompanied by Major von Hörauf, Captain Weingart, and myself.

In another carriage, separate from us, sat Major von Seisser with his General Staff Officer, Captain Forster.

At first, the two opposing staffs paid no attention to one another.

Only after a lengthy discussion between Forster and a member of Epp’s entourage did Colonel von Epp agree to a brief greeting of Major von Seisser.

The reason for von Seisser’s rejection was that, according to information that had reached us, Major von Seisser had also opposed recruitment for the Epp Freikorps while in his previous post.

On April 26, 1919, after several weeks of absence, I returned to Ingolstadt to find the situation different from when I had left.

The group of Freikorps officers with epaulets and German cockades attracted quite a bit of attention; red-colored curses were not uncommon.

While I had a run-in with some revolutionary heroes on the street, Lieutenant Dehne, who had traveled to Ingolstadt in our company, had to answer to the commander of the fortress for his attire, which contradicted the achievements of the revolution.

The general had not yet realized that the time of the councils had come to an end.

After the meetings at the Möhl High Command, we gathered for a light meal at the Kassee Ludwig, where I was able to greet many old and loyal friends.

In the evening, we returned to Alm on the special train that had been provided.

On April 26,

, the corps was placed under the command of the Western Group (Württemberg General Haas).

The Württemberg troops marched into Augsburg.

The Hergott detachment of the Schutzkorps was to carry out an operation against Kempten, which was then transferred to the Landsberg and Swabian Freikorps.

The Schutzkorps was transported via Geltendorf and unloaded in Tutzing.

The administrative staff remained in Alm under the command of Major von Saur, to whom the battalions II and II listed in the formation, the staff company, two batteries, and an engineer company remained subordinate.

At the start of operations against Munich, Colonel von Epp had at his disposal the mobile units of his guard corps, which Lieutenant Colonel Hergott had organized into a detachment (1 battalion, 1 battery, and 1 mortar section), and the Seutter Group of the Württemberg detachment, which comprised 1 battalion, 1 light field howitzer battery, mortars, and motorized artillery.

Lieutenant Colonel Don Haack’s detachment, which united the Freikorps Landsberg and Schwaben, did not arrive in Starnberg until April 30.

in Starnberg.

On April 29

The advance took place via Pöcking and Possenhofen to Starnberg.

The enemy left dead, wounded, and prisoners behind in Possenhofen.

Quarters were established for that night in Wangen, Percha, and Starnberg, with security forces extending as far as Hohen- 89 schäftlarn and Leutstelten.

On April 30

Hohen-Schäftlarn was taken after resistance.

Orders were issued for May 1, 1919, to close the ring around Munich from the south by completely encircling it.

Early in the morning, the troops set out in cold weather and, after a few skirmishes, reached the designated lines.

Through refugees and their own intelligence service, the troops learned of the brutal hostage murder in Munich and various uprisings in the city.

The troops could barely contain their fighting spirit, bitterness, and rage.

Parts of the Prussian encircling forces entered Munich during the night of May 1st.

May.

The joint operation planned for May 2

May at noon on the 12th of May.

Colonel von Epp therefore ordered his corps to advance at 11 a.m.

From Lohhof and Harlaching, the columns set out with the mission to capture Au and Biefing.

The 2nd

And on the 3rd

May, the corps engaged in fierce battles with a tenacious and cunning enemy in the southern suburbs of Munich, particularly in Giesing, which ended with a complete sweep and cleansing.

On the morning of May 2,

May in the morning, while on the march, I was assigned as chief of staff to Lieutenant Colonel Hergott, who had been appointed commander of Munich.

We also took along Lieutenant Bitterauf as an orderly officer and two orderlies armed to the teeth, and reported to Lieutenant General von Oven, who was the supreme commander of all troops dispatched against Munich, at his command post in the railway train that was stopped at the Laim station.

There we met District Administrator Dr.

Roth, who had placed himself at the disposal of the High Command.

We immediately loaded him into our car and took him with us to Munich as head of Department II (Legal Department) of the City Command.

With the black-white-red flag flying proudly, we drove into Munich through Nymphenburg and Neubaufen, greeted enthusiastically and with flowers.

I was able to quickly say hello to my parents and make sure that everything was all right at home, even if the atmosphere was very tense due to the events of the past few days.

The journey continued along Nymphenburger Straße to Stiglmalerplatz.

While we had only been able to get past the Arzbergerleller with difficulty because Prussian troops were still engaged in battle there, it was no longer possible to advance any further at the Löwenbräukeller.

The fighting was still raging there; we had no choice but to turn back and cross the Grünwald Bridge via Nymphenburg to see if we could reach the center of Munich from the other side of the city.

It was not until late at night that we, coming from the Maximilianeum, arrived at our destination, the Hotel “Vier Jahreszeiten,” and took up lodging there.

The hotel was already quite full with several units (Guards Cavalry Division, Detjen).

The General Command from Oven had also already made itself at home here.

However, there was still enough room for the city command staff, which was still small on that day.

I was excellently accommodated in this beautiful hotel, to which even my valet had no objection.

That evening I received the news that the day before, at Stachus, my unforgettable division commander, General von Nagel, had been fatally struck by a German bullet while bringing a machine gun into position. 15.

Chief of Staff to the City Commander of Munich That very night, Lieutenant Colonel Hergott instructed me to prepare a work plan and duty roster for the following morning.

When we went

May, we went to the rooms of the Army Museum, the seat of the old city command, a long line of people was waiting in front of the building, all of them waiting for us with requests and wishes. Extensive organizational work now began.

The city commander, Lieutenant Colonel Hergott, whom I had known and respected in both peacetime and wartime, was an intelligent and energetic man who knew how to tackle every task with his fiery temperament.

The office of city commander held special significance in those days.

Lieutenant General von Oven and his chief of staff, von Anruh, already knew why they had chosen Lieutenant Colonel Hergott for this post.

No special instructions from them were needed to inspire the city commander and me for the cause.

As chief of staff, I was in my element there; the task was to rebuild and reorganize, which I found both enjoyable and fulfilling.

Moreover, working alongside Lieutenant Colonel Hergott was a pleasure.

I had no concerns about completing the staff.

Over the course of the day, many dozens of officers reported for duty.

A number of General Staff officers were able to take over the duties of the planned departments. (Essentially, these were the same officers who still serve on the staff of the State Police today.) For the department in charge of security services, the General Command in Oven had assigned a Prussian General Staff officer who had already gained experience during the North German uprisings.

The legal department was led by Reserve Captain Dr.

Roth with great prudence.

In the meantime, my adjutant, Reserve Lieutenant Bergmann, had also arrived; in short, everything was in perfect order.

Within a few days, an excellently functioning staff had been assembled, comprising about 30 officers.

In addition to overseeing the overall operations, which fell to me, I had reserved the following as special areas of responsibility: the partial reduction and reorganization of the Schutzmannschaft and the police, the formation of a guard regiment for Munich, and the establishment of a civilian defense force.

The first two tasks immediately brought me into contact with the newly appointed Munich police chief, Ernst Pöhner.

In him I came to know a man whom Heaven had preserved for this task.

Intelligent, far-sighted, and energetic, he knew how to thoroughly clean up, in a short time, the immense abuses that the revolution had brought about, particularly within the police and the civil guard.

At the same time, he stood like a lioness before even the lowliest of his subordinates to protect them from harm or unjust treatment.

He need not have been a front-line officer to possess, alongside the will to devote himself to the utmost, a heart for all those entrusted to him.

It goes without saying that in all major matters decided jointly by the city command and the police department, a man like Ernst Pöhner always ensured immediate agreement.

There was only one instance in which I had to hurt his feelings, but I really had no other choice: the mounted guard had grown considerably, and the finest horses of the disbanded 1st

Heavy Cavalry Regiment.

I now needed these horses for the brave Schutzregiment, whereas, in my opinion, too many mounted Schutzleute can be a source of trouble.

I therefore, despite the president's sharp protests, disbanded the unit without further ado and transferred the horses to the guard regiment, which was very grateful for this.

Unfortunately, it was later reformed.

I envisioned the Guard Regiment (or, as it was later called, the Defense Regiment) as a kind of municipal force for the city of Munich, which was primarily intended to take over the entire guard and security service.

I originally estimated the regiment's strength at 5 battalions of 4 companies each, 2 artillery units totaling 3 batteries and 1 mortar battery, 1 squadron, 1 armored car and tank unit, together about 300 men, including 125 officers.

One day, Lieutenant Colonel Hergott introduced me to Masor a.

D.

Färber, who also oversaw the formation of the regiment.

The greatest difficulty was the formation of the Munich Home Guard.

The task was difficult, less because of organizational issues than because of the political resistance that initially opposed its establishment.

Since these matters are less well known, yet are significant not only for Munich but also for the development of the local defense force in general, I would like to recount a little of its history here.

I knew from the very beginning exactly what I wanted: a water-based civil defense force in which every single man would have a hose in his hand.

That sounds very simple and almost self-evident today; back then, the strongest resistance was directed precisely against it.

The staff commander approved the proposal I submitted to him.

Likewise, General von Oven, who held executive authority in Munich, and his chief of staff, Major von Anruh, fully endorsed my plan.

However, the Bavarian government under Hossmann opposed it with extreme tenacity.

Dr.

Ewinger, the Nuremberg Social Democrat and former co-owner of the firm "Stellv.

General-fommando II.

Bavarian

Armeekorps," who had a decisive say in this circle, did indeed agree to the formation of a militia, but wanted nothing to do with the distribution of water.

These were to be provided in water depots, following the Nuremberg model.

From his point of view, the man was quite right, and I could understand why he attached such importance to this particular point.

All the more reason for me to know that I was on the right track.

I took the position: either a civilian defense force is formed, to which the weapons are handed over, or none is established at all.

My reasons are set forth in detail in a personal report to General Oven's command, which I include here.

Subject: Water supply for the local militia.

Munich, May 13,

May 1919.

The Civil Guard is intended to serve the self-defense of the population against acts of violence and, in special cases, to be deployed en masse to reinforce the police and the Guard Regiment.

There is no question that the police, even after their intended full-scale expansion and reinforcement, cannot guarantee the adequate protection of Munich.

Whether the Guard Regiment, which is being established to provide military reinforcement for the police, will become a fully reliable force cannot yet be taken as a given.

Given the passive and unchanging stance that the Bavarian government continues to adopt even today, there is a danger that partisan political influences will once again gain ground within this institution.

This, however, undermines the certainty that the military will remain an absolutely reliable instrument for upholding the state.

It could then happen that, following another coup, the regiment aligns itself with an unlawful, anti-state government.

This would leave the citizen—by which I generally mean the resident here—defenseless against terror if he is unarmed.

I therefore envision the citizen militia, whose absolutely reliable composition can be expected, as a

final iron reserve for situations that I still consider conceivable in Munich and Bavaria.

The situation in Munich is by no means as pacified as an outsider might perceive it to be.

Beneath the ashes, the fire of revolutionary fury continues to smolder.

A walk through the streets, into the coffeehouses and beer halls, will confirm this to the doubters.

If the imperial troops were to withdraw today, it would signal the start of subversive activities among the

independent, easily influenced Bavarian troops, provided that the Bavarian government troops have by then attained any significant degree of effectiveness—a state from which they are currently still far removed.

After the occupation of Munich, the High Command and the City Command must carry out a general demobilization, including the citizen militias, etc.

The severity of this measure for the citizens, who themselves had contributed to the liberation of Munich, had to be imposed upon them.

The hardship this entailed for the citizens, who themselves had contributed to the liberation of Munich, had to be imposed upon them.

However, this harsh measure could also be demanded of them, since they were assured that everything would be done to safeguard life, property, and the protection of labor.

After all state authority had ceased, the weapons were the only thing every citizen still possessed for self-defense and, moreover, to assist in the rescue of their beloved hometown. 93 If, therefore, an unconditional guarantee could not be provided by the state, and I have reason to doubt this based on the preceding remarks “that such circumstances will not recur, it would be irresponsible to refrain from re-flooding the inhabitants.

Apart from a temporary pacification of Munich, we would then have achieved only one practical result: that through the drainage

There can be no doubt, despite everything, that this primarily affected the bourgeois elements, while the partisans, having lawfully withdrawn their water from the fields, left the local citizens defenseless.

The question of storing water in reservoirs would, in my view, be equally dangerous and must therefore be rejected.

The seizure, occupation, and depletion of the water reservoirs by the Spartacists would be one of the first acts in a coup, the rapid success of which I have no doubt.

We would then merely have provided water reservoirs for our opponents, which would constitute a valuable addition to their arsenal—one they can already count on.

As long as there is no complete clarity on this matter in Bavaria—until we have a leader who maintains

iron discipline—the Bavarian state cannot protect life, property, and work on its own.

But as long as the state cannot guarantee this protection, it must enable citizens to protect themselves.

The armed civil defense force is therefore a legitimate demand of the citizenry for the transitional period until the establishment of orderly conditions, which the state must support by all means.

I would like to add that the representatives of the Social Democratic Party who participated in the discussions fully endorsed this position. 8 signed: A.

B.

N h m.

The Chief of Staff of the General Command, who considered the formation of the Civil Defense Force to be a matter of great urgency, gave me the pleasant task of resolving the differences of opinion with my Bavarian compatriots myself.

To assist me, to gather the wishes of the population, and to prepare for the formation of the defense force, I had appointed a Civil Defense Committee consisting of members from all walks of life and representatives of the political parties, including the Social Democrats.

In selecting the members, I was particularly assisted by attorney Dr.

Fries and the energetic Dr. Meper.

The committee met daily in my office; at times, the meetings were heated: the bourgeois representatives clashed with the Social Democrats one after another, so that I often had to intervene to mediate.

I eventually convinced the entire committee—including the Social Democratic representatives—of the correctness of my position.

The latter asked me, since they did not believe they could prevail with their party’s executive committee, to address this committee personally.

The Executive Committee met in several rooms of the Royal

Residence and was, in fact, a body superior to the Hossmann government.

If I succeeded in winning over the influential men, I would have won the day.

So, accompanied by my faithful Bergmann, I went to the socialist headquarters and spoke with the key figures. The reception was friendly and warm; we were treated to beer and cheese and had a very good conversation.

They were all ordinary people; we sat in their circle for about an hour and talked about war and revolution and what was to come.

I said that the officers were, after all, quite decent people; the comrades said they were also quite decent people, and the result was that the representatives of the committee signed the protocol I had prepared, agreed to my plans, and we parted in peace and friendship.

I do not wish to be misunderstood here: the men with whom I consulted at the residence were German men who, out of inner conviction, agreed to my plans and assured me of their cooperation.

I was proud of my success and hurried straight to the group's chief of staff.

There I was initially given a hard time because I arrived an hour late; once again, a meeting had been scheduled to finalize the issue of the local militia.

The General Command was very displeased that the matter had not progressed.

I first let myself be scolded in front of the assembled officers for having accomplished nothing.

Only after I had taken my necessary scoldings did I calmly pull out my written report and hand it to the chief.

Now any further discussion was superfluous.

The task could now be tackled as I had proposed: the idea had taken shape.

The Commanding General and the Chief of Staff praised me for my tenacity and congratulated me on my success.

In the meantime, the rest of the work at the city command had continued unchanged.

The workload grew to such an extent that the staff had to be expanded and the offices were no longer sufficient.

After lengthy negotiations with all sorts of agencies, particularly with the administrative department of the Ministry of War, which cost me a great deal of valuable time, I succeeded in having the city command assigned the "Russischer Hof" hotel.

Security measures were increasingly improved and expanded by the relevant department, and the intelligence service was organized within a special General Staff department.

The remnants of the Red Army were also thoroughly cleared out of the barracks; the Republican Guard, which had certainly earned some merit, was disbanded.

Special attention also had to be paid at that time to the conduct of officers in public.

Some uniformed officers, who had previously imposed the utmost restraint on themselves—especially regarding the possibility of joining a Freikorps—felt the time had come to reappear before an astonished public in the splendor of their uniforms.

Those who had been present at the liberation of Munich were soon no longer seen in uniform; instead, it was those who had carefully kept their uniforms in the closet at that time.

The command headquarters took a very firm hand in this matter.

Quite a few officers who came to me and offered their valuable services for a special assignment—mostly not under a battalion commander—had to be instructed by me that being an officer means serving the fatherland, regardless of one's position.

Lieutenant Colonel Hergott's harsh crackdown in all areas had aroused the displeasure and fear of the Hossmann government.

It had therefore been plotting for some time to remove him from his dangerous post.

Unfortunately, the Bavarian High Command under Möhl did not oppose the machinations of the Bavarian representatives with sufficient sharpness and forcefulness; the General Command in Open ultimately had no choice but to leave the appointment of personnel to the Bavarians.

Colonel Hergott was sacrificed and returned to the helm of his regiment.

In his place, Major von Seisser, who was acceptable to the Red Government,

Seisser, who was acceptable to the Red Government, was appointed city commander.

For me, my course of action was, of course, clear.

I resigned from my post as chief of staff at the same time as my commander.

Since the formation of the local militia was more or less tied to my person, the General Command made a strong effort to persuade me to remain in my post.

However, I could not change my decision and merely agreed to continue serving for a few days under the changed circumstances to hand over the duties and brief my successor.

Then I returned to the staff of the Schutzkorps.

A small chapter of my military life was thus concluded; for only a short time did I hold a self-created position in which I had the greatest responsibility, but also the greatest independence and relatively the greatest influence.

In the few days of my tenure, I succeeded in laying the foundation for a project that was destined to play a decisive role in the further development of my homeland.

For this reason, I voluntarily relinquished an activity that had become dear to me—indeed, even an influential position—as I would do more often in my later life, because I considered it my duty.

Looking back, I do not regret it and intend to continue doing so in the future.

The fate that is predestined for a person follows its own inexorable course.

Nearly the entire former inner circle of the city command now forms the staff of the state police

command.

I do not believe that I would have found happiness if I had one day become a member of the police force in this way.

I found even more satisfaction in the Reichswehr for the time being! 16.

Soldier and Politics In any case, I took one insight from my brief assignment at the City Command for the future: An officer must learn to think and act politically; otherwise, he is of no use in a position of responsibility.

One must admit that I did not push myself to mount the political horse; I was simply placed in a field of work where I had to be politically active, otherwise I would not have fulfilled my military duty.

Similar demands had already been placed on me during my service at the War Ministry.

The army and politics are so closely intertwined that it is simply impossible to separate one from the other.

This fact by no means necessitates political or even party-political activity on the part of every member of the military.

However, it does require that, at the very least, officers be politically educated—and educate themselves—so that, when in positions of responsibility, they learn to act politically in a manner consistent with military requirements.

It is certainly not correct to claim that the Royal Army or the Imperial Navy were apolitical, and to conclude from this that the Wehrmacht must be apolitical today.

The German Army as such was the state's strongest and greatest political instrument, bound to the sovereign through the oath of allegiance as the executive organ of his political will.

Anyone who sought to deny that the oath of allegiance demanded of the individual soldier a clear and binding political commitment—namely, to protect the throne and the fatherland under all circumstances against all adversaries unto death—would be denying facts that cannot be dismissed.

Nor can these facts be denied on the grounds that the princes voluntarily relinquished their right to demand the ultimate consequence of the political commitment of their subjects serving in the army.

A unified political stance was thus established for the entire army.

Unfortunately, the members of this army concluded from this unambiguous stance that there was no need to concern themselves with political matters that lay outside the scope of this commitment.

Assuming there exists a system of government that has nothing to fear from change, and that the system of the old state would have been such a system, one might perhaps acknowledge the validity of this position.

But since history teaches us that such a state system will never exist, this position is and was wrong and

was therefore bound to backfire.

In any case,

November 1918, in any case, dealt the army a relentless and terrible blow for the political indifference of its professional soldiers, the

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especially of its officers and non-commissioned officers.

In this context, I can entirely disregard the immeasurable harm to the welfare of the entire workforce; I am concerned here only with the destructive effect on the welfare of these professional classes themselves: 94% of active officers sacrificed their blood for the fatherland during the war; they remained dead or wounded on the battlefields.

A truly almost unbelievable percentage of sacrifices that this professional class has made in the nation's struggle for survival.

No other profession, no other class, has paid a toll in blood to the fatherland that comes even close.

And the result?

No profession and no class was as disenfranchised after the end of the war, in which it made these sacrifices, as that of the active officers.

And was the situation any different for the active non-commissioned officers?

This experience, having been lived through firsthand, should, in my opinion, at any rate turn the career officer of today into a political officer.

Despite November 1918, he has not, for the most part, become one.

It is understandable that the state as such, particularly the Weimar state, has no interest in the politicization of the professional officer corps.

It is hardly in the interest of this state; it wants its leaders to be "apolitical" in order to force the masses of the led unhindered into its political system.

But I will demonstrate that this renunciation of a political right, which cannot be denied to them, runs counter to the interests of the soldierly class.

The November Revolution has shown that the renunciation of political thought and will proved fatal to the officer corps.

The officer can and must, as a mercenary in a foreign land he serves, remain apolitical; in his homeland, he must not.

In the Old Army, the sovereign stood at the head as the supreme soldier, the one who made the final,

including political, decisions.

At least back then, the Ossician was spared having to take orders from a non-soldier.

Today we live in a parliamentary state; at the head of the army stands a gentleman in a tailcoat and top hat, and

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A parliamentarian, a civilian, a non-officer.

Politicians and parliamentarians are therefore no longer barred from influencing the army to the same extent as in the old state.

Even in the face of this situation, which has changed to his disadvantage, and despite the experiences of November 9,

November 1918, the officer wishes to remain “apolitical,” this renunciation, which springs from a spirit of convenience and indolence, seems to me to amount to a surrender of oneself.

But then the professional soldier must not complain if fate passes him by, if not only his professional but ultimately also his private and personal destiny is completely shaped by those to whom he has ceded political action.

In any case, I was not willing to renounce my right to political thought and action in the name of the official duties assigned to me, and I have exercised that right. 17.

Epp Rifle Brigade At the end of May 1919, the Epp staff moved into the premises of the Bavarian Army Museum.

In the meantime, by order of the Bavarian High Command Möhl, the Schützenkorps had become the “Great Bavarian Schützen Brigade 21.”

The Schützen Corps, consisting of the Hergolt and Haack regiments, had been reinforced for integration by: the Oberland Freikorps, the Bogendörfer and Probstmayr detachments, the Würzburg, Bayreuth, Wolf, and Berthold Freikorps, as well as numerous cavalry and artillery units.

The organizational work dragged on for weeks and months.

It was not until July 24, 1919, that the Freikorps Epp was finally incorporated into the Bavarian Reichswehr.

With great energy, capable officers had quickly put together a sizeable, well-structured military force.

The fact that attempts were repeatedly made to undermine the strengthening of the force and to remove Colonel von Epp is demonstrated by the attempt to appoint Colonel von Mieg to his position.

In response to Colonel von Epp’s unequivocal refusal to relinquish command of his troops and step down from his post, this decision made in Krähwinkel was ultimately rescinded.

The first attempt to get rid of this troublesome man had thus failed.

In addition to the 21st Rifle Brigade, two other brigades were being mobilized in Bavaria.

Developments in northern Germany soon gave Colonel von Epp the satisfaction of being able to send a detachment of his troops, under the command of Colonel Hergott, to Hamburg to suppress the unrest there.

The detachment's combat unit was the 2nd

Battalion of the 41st Rifle Regiment under the command of First Lieutenant Hofmann.

He lived up to his reputation—that of a ruthlessly dashing officer earned on the battlefield—in Hamburg, as I heard.

In any case, the Bavarians are said to have left behind a very good reputation and a positive legacy.

I would like to describe here an incident that took place in the summer of 1919, because it shows what a self-assured spirit was still common among the troops at that time.

I believe the occasion was the dissolution of the Bavarian Army or the transfer of the Bavarian troops to the Reich.

The Bavarian Army was represented by the esteemed Minister Schneppenhorst; for the handover, Reich Minister of Defense Nosle—and I believe even Provisional Reich President Ebert—had arrived in Munich.

The ceremonial event took place at the Marsseld Barracks.

Colonel Hergott flatly refused to participate in this event with his regiment and did not march out for the "celebration."

The grand republican parade then took place on a smaller scale.

My official duties brought me into frequent contact with volunteers even back then.

The equipment depot, which Lieutenant Gärtner headed, continued to expand.

As early as 1919, but mainly in 1920, I gathered around me a select group of loyal and selfless officers who managed the numerous transports to and from the equipment depot.

Lieutenant Zech, Lieutenant Neunzert, and Lieutenant Czermak are just a few names of those who loved their fatherland dearly and willingly performed every duty and made every effort for the Great Cause. 7. 99 The Bavarian Home Guard had, in the meantime, developed strongly.

Not only in Munich, but even more so in the countryside, strong defense units were formed from the best elements of the people.

A provincial leadership had taken the helm, implementing a unified organization throughout the province.

The energetic councilor Escherich was the creator and the soul of the entire militia.

He was assisted by First Lieutenant Kriebel, the superior, determined, and calm organizer.

Colonel von Epp and the President of the State Council, von Kahr, were eager supporters of the cause.

Colonel von Epp entrusted me with the overall handling of all matters related to the Home Guard, in particular the provisioning of the Home Guard units with water, ammunition, and equipment; a field of work that kept me occupied for years to come.

I made one of my officers from the equipment depot available to the provincial leadership, who took over the logistics department on the staff there; the majority of the transport officers also transferred to the ranks of the Home Guard. On occasion, I accompanied my commander on his visits to Home Guard units in the countryside.

I recall, for instance, the visit by Reichswehr Minister Gustav Noste to a local defense unit in Chiemgau, in the presence of the then Bavarian Social Democratic Minister of the Interior, Endres, Colonel von Epp, and District President von Kahr.

Supplying and equipping the newly formed Reichswehr brigade, frequent resupply of the artillery units, and equipping the troops provided the 1st Battalion, which I commanded, with a great deal of work.

Intendant Pauer had meanwhile taken the helm of the Quartermaster Corps, with which I had to work very closely; he knew how to handle the difficult supply conditions of the time well.

Thus the spring of 1920 had arrived, and at times the political sky was briefly illuminated by minor but nonetheless significant events.

It had gradually become customary for activists in the political movement to visit me from time to time.

Thus, I always remained up to date on the discussions in these circles.

During this time—though it may have been a little later—I would occasionally hold meetings with like-minded people, usually at Captain Beppo Römer’s apartment, together with a few comrades from the Reichswehr.

The association called itself “Eiserne Faust” and had nationalist, slightly revolutionary goals.

A member of the association who frequently traveled to Berlin always brought us news from there about the situation in northern Germany, which, as far as I am aware, originated mainly from the circle around Count zu Rebentlow.

If I recall correctly, it was Captain Mayr who one day also brought Adolf Hitler into this circle.

Hitler was an education officer on the staff of the group command and, like Herr Esser as press officer, was subordinate to the Political Department, which Captain Mayr headed.

This ambitious officer, who today plays a leading role in the Marxist Reichs-Banner, had, with the agility that was characteristic of him, managed to gain access and influence in circles that were strongly nationalistic.

In addition to his exemplary service as deputy commander of the military district headquarters, a position that gave him an independent and responsible sphere of activity, he devoted his attention to all political endeavors.

I have no reason to believe that he was not acting in good faith in this regard.

Thus, he was perhaps the most decisive proponent of the Kapp enterprise in Bavaria.

One day, in early March, a young man—or so I thought—was brought to me; he introduced himself as an envoy of General Director von Kapp and briefly explained to me that the Reich government had been overthrown and that a military government was to be installed in its place.

I naturally welcomed the news as such, but became very concerned when, from the back-and-forth discussion, I detected a serious lack of preparation.

In particular, preparations in Bavaria seemed, at first, to be limited to this inquiry to me.

The envoy did not agree to a briefing by my commander, which I had insisted upon.

Thus, nothing could be done on my part to initiate preparatory work.

The messenger decided merely to let the intelligence officer of the group command, Captain Mayr, in on the plan.

While I held back—since I did not like the messenger's character and my own assignment was not clearly defined—he found support from Captain Mayr for the further preparation and execution of his plans.

I merely had a reliable officer from the sending agency in Berlin convey the message that various preparations were underway in Bavaria, and that I considered the dispatch of a suitable liaison officer and the initiation of precautionary measures to be necessary.

It is not without interest to compare the subsequent life paths of the two men who sought to prepare the ground for Kapp's enterprise in Bavaria.

While Mayr is now—after repeated attempts to play a role in nationalist circles—a pillar of the Social Democratic Party, Kapp's former envoy is now a contributor to the *Vossische* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. 18.

The Rapp enterprise and the Ruhr uprising.

On March 13,

March 1920, the Kapp≠-Uprising broke out.

Now, the question of what and to what extent more weight should be placed in a revolutionary enterprise—on the greatest possible secrecy or on the most thorough preparation—will never be resolved.

What benefits one aspect harms the other.

Finding the right balance between these two necessities will always have to be decided by the art and intuition of the revolutionary leader.

Kapp decided, at least as far as Bavaria was concerned, in favor of secrecy.

He believed he could do without decisive preparation in this case.

General von Lüttwitz, the military leader of the operation, likely assumed that the Bavarian Reichswehr would readily join a movement aimed at breaking the Marxist rule and mismanagement in the region.

In this, he was unfortunately mistaken.

Of course, we young “impulsive” officers jubilantly welcomed the liberating act in Berlin.

My very “impulsive” orderly officer even had the black-white-red flag hoisted on the roof of the barracks as soon as the news from Berlin arrived, an example that the brave pioneers immediately followed.

But the commander in charge and his co-responsible chief of staff could bring themselves to issue a formal statement.

The Bavarian Division stood by Kapp and stood by Ebert—it waited.

That alone, I am convinced, is why the Kapp-Lüttwitz enterprise failed.

We all, after all, viewed Ebert and the entire Mariften government with feelings that the Republic Protection Act unfortunately prohibits me from describing today.

Now a general stood up and finally dared to act.

There could be no hesitation; the entire armed forces had to stand by this general’s side as one man, without any ifs or buts.

Instead, the generals conferred, deliberated, and gave the fallen government time to recover.

And they abandoned their comrades in Berlin, who dared to stick their necks out.

Don’t come at me with that philistine drivel about the dangers of foreign and domestic policy and, God knows, what else.

A strong will in Berlin would have banished domestic political difficulties quite quickly, and as for foreign policy: it is hardly conceivable how we could have been humiliated any more than we were

anyway.

But these are idle musings today.

The fact is that the bold undertaking in Berlin, like so many other liberating acts, foundered on the “indecisiveness”—or, let us say, the lack of resolve—of the generals.

Among the troops, in the ranks of the Reichswehr, and among the volunteer units, this hesitation was received with grace.

At the Prinz-Arnulf Barracks, the leaders of the temporary volunteer units held heated discussions throughout the evening and night, to which Colonel von Epp was urgently summoned in the course of the night; he appeared at the barracks accompanied by Major von Hörauf and myself.

Rittmeister Baron von Thüngen and First Lieutenant Hemmeter knew how to whip up the fighting spirit to the highest degree with rousing speeches.

The excerpt from a report that I include here provides the clearest picture of how events unfolded up to the morning of March 14.

March. “The announcement by the Bavarian State Ministry on March 13

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M., which was co-signed by the representatives of the parties of the Bavarian State Parliament and the Commander-in-Chief of the Bavarian Reichswehr, General von Möhl, caused the greatest agitation among the members of the Reichswehr and the mobilized volunteer troops due to the severity with which the events in Berlin, caused the greatest agitation among members of the Reichswehr and the mobilized volunteers.

It was known that the local Reichswehr stood almost unanimously behind the movement in Berlin.

From the wording of the government announcement of the 13th

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It was believed that one could infer from this that the Bavarian state government intended to throw down the gauntlet to the Reich and to align itself with a government that, at the very moment it had to leave the scene of its activity, proclaimed a general strike.

The agitation intensified even further when, in the evening, the news came that the Bavarian state government had called a general strike for Sunday morning at 10 a.m. from the A.

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The mass rally scheduled at the Krone Circus was not only not banned, but approved, and the government did not prevent the well-known agitator and Member of Parliament Geyer from Saxony from traveling to this rally.

The Reichswehr soldiers and the temporary volunteers were outraged that, while they were willing to commit themselves to maintaining peace, order, and work, the government, the guardian of public order, tolerated the mass gathering of those elements who constituted the opponents of those called to Zu den Wassen.

This outrage explains the resolution passed around midnight by representatives of all categories of those stationed at Zu den Wassen in the Infantry Life Guard Regiment Barracks to approach the commander of the Bavarian Reichswehr Group Command, General von Möhl, to request that the government, which apparently was unwilling or unable to issue a firm rejection to the elements of the radical left, consent to the transfer of executive power to the military commander-in-chief.

To avoid any appearance of indiscipline, a delegation was formed to lead the civil defense, and the district governor, in agreement with the brigade commander, was requested, in view of the gravity of the situation, to make the delegation's request his own and to present it to General von Möhl.

The governor decided to grant the delegation's request after securing the permission of the Prefect of Upper Bavaria and the Munich Police Department, who agreed with him and the delegation in their assessment of the situation.

That very night, he went with the delegation and the two presidents to General von Möhl, who readily agreed to ask the State Ministry—and specifically Minister President Hossmann—to transfer executive authority, as provided for by the constitution in the event of unrest.

General von Möhl then proceeded, accompanied by District President von Kahr, Police President Pöhner, Forestry Councilor Escherich, and Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, along with representatives of the volunteer corps, to meet with Prime Minister Hossmann." So far the report, for whose legalese I am not responsible.

The energetic Zeumant Oesterreicher of the Oberland Freikorps lent the delegation the necessary weight in the manner he deemed appropriate.

Prime Minister Hossmann resigned.

As is well known, Mr. von Kahr took his place.

Bavaria thus owed the Kapp Putsch a new—and, one might well say, better—government.

A meager result, after all, when one considers that the fate of the Reich could have been decided in Munich.

To cool things down, I was assigned in the following days as a liaison officer to the General State Commissioner at the Police Headquarters.

The State Commissioner was His Excellency Don Winterslein, a distinguished, stern, and energetic man.

It was here that I first got to know Pöhner in his true element, as well as his assistant, Dr.

Frick, the head of the Political Division.

Pöhner and Frick were a pair of Dioscuri who complemented each other.

While Pöhner was a hothead—energetic, brave, and quick to make decisions—Frick was perhaps somewhat cooler and more thoughtful, yet no less tenacious, determined, and willing to take responsibility.

Pöhner was perhaps quicker to decide to take a certain course of action, but just as quick to abandon that course and take another if he deemed it necessary and appropriate.

Frick might have been slower to commit to a cause; but once he recognized it as right, he held fast to it tenaciously and continued on his path unwaveringly.

Pöhner and Frick were the most prominent figures of the new government, even though they did not officially sit at the negotiating table.

But whatever was done to consolidate state authority, purge the state apparatus, cleanse public life, and suppress Marxist excesses was the work of these men.

Besides me, another officer from the military district command was present as a liaison officer, as well as, for the most part, Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel.

Thanks to the work of Kriebel and Escherich, the Home Guard had by then become a political force to be reckoned with, one that had a decisive say in the decisions of the state leadership.

Nowhere in Bavaria did unrest of any significant magnitude occur.

The situation was different in Central and Western Germany.

In the Ruhr region, the struggle flared up intensely.

The Reich government, which happened to be in Stuttgart and had once again taken the reins in the absence of a replacement, had to decide to rapidly deploy large parts of the Reichswehr from all areas of Germany to the threatened region.

End.

In Bavaria, the Epp Detachment was formed from parts of the Reichswehr and temporary volunteer units, which rolled out to Rehda in Westphalia within a few days.

On the journey, we had the dubious pleasure of encountering the Ebert government, which was returning from its trip from Stuttgart to Berlin.

The clear shouts that rang out from the soldiers' compartments toward the "Father of the State" and his entourage must have left the traveling party in no doubt as to the sentiments of the Bavarian Ruhr fighters.

From Rehda, the Epp Rifle Brigade set out on March 26, 1920, on a march into the Ruhr region, which took them via Beckum to Pelkum, where a solemn ceremony took place, then to Hamm, and finally to Dortmund.

The entry into Dortmund crowned the undertaking.

The orderly organization of supplies encountered no small difficulties.

But they were overcome.

Höfle, who accompanied me, and Seelirchner in Munich were faithful helpers.

The capable senior administrative secretary Kirsch, who was assigned to me, supported me to the best of his ability.

The postal command post, initially in Rehda and later in Dortmund, was headed by the capable postal inspector Hessenauer, whom I had brought over from Berchtesgaden.

The experiences in logistics, which I summarized at the end of the operation in a report sent to the Reichswehr Ministry, were fully taken into account in the revision of regulations.

In Epp's staff, alongside Captain Stemmermann, who handled tactical matters, Captain Weingart stood out in particular.

Through his skillful leadership of the intelligence service, he rendered outstanding service in this regard.

In Dortmund, I received a most cordial welcome from the genuinely German family of the factory owner Theobald.

At that time, I also had the opportunity for the first time to visit a coal mine, gained insight into the dangerous and grueling life of the worker underground, and learned to admire his quiet heroism.

Pacification had proceeded rapidly in those parts of the Ruhr region where the Reichswehr had moved in.

All the more furiously, the entire revolutionary press of the Reich railed against the troops.

The reorganization of the Reichswehr, the removal of officers, and the formation of a workers' militia were the constantly repeated demands of the Red press.

Since the Reich government took no action against this subversive newspaper smear campaign, the troops were seized by extraordinary agitation and discontent.

They loudly demanded an end to this press agitation and the immediate cessation of the investigation against so-called “reactionary” elements of the Reichswehr, which had begun in some places.

Already, the interventions of the Reich government and its emissaries were making themselves felt in the most sensitive manner in the Ruhr region as well.

The continuation of operations, the march into Wuppertal, where red workers’ guards were holding their drill exercises undisturbed, was halted at the government’s behest.

To make matters worse, Mr. Severing was imposed on the Commander-in-Chief as a state commissioner.

Mr. Severing not only had the authority to oversee all military measures and intervene in them as he saw fit, but also to review all court-martial judgments and, if necessary, overturn them.

From a soldier’s point of view, the situation toward the end of April 1920 could be described as nothing short of a disgrace.

Here, once again, the fruits of the officers’ apolitical upbringing became all too evident.

At that time, the Ruhr region was home to the finest assembled force, of a quality and combat effectiveness that had never been achieved long before and would never be achieved again.

The best troops were assembled in sufficient numbers and were capable of keeping all of Germany in check.

There was the closest connection with the other troops not present in the Ruhr region.

The troops had a history of brilliant successes and were firmly in the hands of their leaders.

On the other hand, the Reich government’s standing among the people had sunk below zero due to Ehrhardt’s coup d’état and their “brave” flight to Württemberg.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Reichswehr, General Baron von Wat≥ ter, did not take advantage of the situation.

Discussions took place in which the commanders of the troops, urged on by their subordinates, sought to push him to take action.

The “action” took place: Baron von Watter resigned.

In 1926, General von Watter received the thanks of the Reich government from Reichswehr Minister Gessler, who described him in terse terms as a “mad general.”

Some volunteer troops, who were deeply embittered, could no longer be held back and had to be transported back to their home bases.

Dr.

Geßler, the new Reichswehr Minister, sent home shortly thereafter.

Once again, a historic moment had passed for the army and the people.

Perhaps it had been the last in which the army could have rallied against the new spirit of Weimar, against its degradation into a mercenary force in the service of the Marxist and Golden International.

Once again, a German general held the fate of Germany in his hands.

He lowered his sharp sword before the November state and sheathed it.

And Herr Ebert knew that he could rely on his officers.

I always read that in Spain, Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey, China, Mexico, etc.

generals have cleaned up corruption and parliamentary stagnation—in short: made a revolution.

With the German generals, there seems to be no need to fear that.

They limit themselves mainly to accumulating service and pension entitlements.

The collapse of the Kapp Putsch and the inglorious liquidation—I can find no other term—of the Ruhr uprising had demonstrated the lack of fighting spirit and resistance in national Germany. 106 The natural consequence was that the external and internal enemies found a way to completely crush the national resistance cells and groups.

The summer of 1920 thus marks the beginning of a phase in which the enemy states employ every means to completely drain Germany of its moral and material strength.

As their formal ally, Marxism as a whole stands by their side with the same objective.

The Reich government is neither willing nor able to decisively oppose this onslaught; it is surrendering the nation’s resistance piece by piece with an almost unprecedented lack of responsibility.

Only in Bavaria is the government, installed by nationalists, attempting to take a stand against this complete depletion and degradation.

The history of this eventful struggle, in which on one side stand the enemy alliance, Marxism, and the November democracy—supported, willingly or by force, by the governments of the Reich and the Marxist-led states—and on the other, backed by the Reichswehr and by nationally minded men in the government and state authorities of Bavaria, the patriotic movement of national resistance, will be the subject of the following remarks. 19.

Joining the German Workers’ Party and Work in Patriotic Organizations.

To understand what follows, it is necessary for me to briefly summarize my political activities outside

the scope of my military service.

Like many of my comrades in the Reichswehr, I had joined the “German National People’s Party in Bavaria” as a member shortly after our entry into Munich in 1919 and had cast my vote for it in the elections.

At the time, it was undoubtedly the party that promised to champion national interests most vigorously.

However, there were already some things that did not sit well with me at the time, and I therefore repeatedly engaged in lively correspondence with the party’s state executive director.

I was particularly disappointed by their meetings.

Although there were speakers with whom I could wholeheartedly agree, the audience was not the kind of people I would have liked to see there: fellow citizens from all walks of life.

The membership consisted far too much of the intellectual upper class, of academics, civil servants, university professors, and quite a few women!

Then one day a friend took me to a meeting of the “German Workers’ Party” at the Gaftbau hall for the “German Reich.”

Drexler presided over the meeting, and Feder spoke.

The impression was so good that I immediately joined the party as a member.

I was not yet the 70th

member of the Young Party. 107 The “German Workers’ Party” has a brief but nonetheless eventful history behind it, which I wish to briefly outline here, since it was decisive for my following.

Moreover, I believe that it is not generally known.

The movement was born on March 7,

March 1918.

On that day, a group of loosely organized factory workers formed a “Workers’ Committee for a Just Peace” in Munich to inform German workers of the enemy powers’ intent to annihilate them and to call for a fight against war profiteers and black marketeers. At that time, 26 brave German workers were fighting a losing battle, without any help, mocked and ridiculed by their own fellow workers.

In October, the first public meeting took place with great success in the Wagner Hall under Drerler’s chairmanship.

Immediately after the revolution, these German men gathered in a small circle to discuss the causes and effects of the revolution and to provide information about the destructive work of Judaism.

On January 5,

January 1919, these workers united in the “German Workers’ Party” and elected Drepler as their first chairman.

Drexler was a simple German man who performed his hard duties at the vise in the main workshop of the state railways during the day; a man of integrity among the manual laborers.

He devoted all his free time to the welfare of the entire people and, in particular, to his fellow workers.

Without financial support from wealthy patrons, relying solely on meager membership dues, he worked tirelessly to promote the party and its ideas and goals.

Over time, the meeting halls became too small.

Dietrich Eckart, Gottfried Feder, Adolf Hiller, and Hermann Esser were recruited as speakers and joined the party.

I rarely missed a meeting and was able to bring at least one friend to the party at each gathering, mainly from the ranks of the Reichswehr; thus, we comrades-in-arms from the Reichswehr were also able to contribute many building blocks to the rise of the Young Movement.

On February 24,

February 1920, the party announced the movement’s goals in 25 points for the first time before a broad public at a large mass meeting in the Hosbräuhaus ballroom.

From that day on, it began to grow rapidly.

The meetings had to be moved from the Hofbräuhaus ballroom to the Münchner Kindlkeller, and from there to the Krone Circus.

On July 29,

July 1921, after overcoming internal struggles within the party, Hitler was elected the first

Chairman of the “National Socialist German Workers’ Party.”

My particular interest lay with the Storm Troopers of the N.

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P., for which Captain Ehrhardt, at Hitler’s request, had made officers from his brigade available as organizational leaders.

The magnificent Lieutenant Klintzsch was the organizer and leader of the battle-ready storm troop,

which had the opportunity to demonstrate its courage and strength in several rally clashes.

After the disbandment of his brigade, Captain Ehrhardt had set up his headquarters in Munich.

That is why I often had the opportunity back then to meet with the well-known Freikorps leader.

Working at his side as his chief of staff was the calm, thoughtful, resolute, and clear-sighted Lieutenant Commander Hossmann, who always knew how to resolve disagreements and difficulties through his warm and engaging manner.

Dr.

Hahnke, alias Schnitzler, was his political advisor.

In him, I came to know one of the sharpest minds with an eventful past and, as was to become apparent later, an eventful future as well.

He knew how to weave the threads of his political networks into Bavarian political circles as well, thereby establishing closer ties with Privy Councilor Dr.

Heim.

This support was, of course, of essential importance for Ehrhardt's stay and work in Bavaria.

Lieutenant von Killinger, an indomitable veteran, Lieutenant Kautter, whom I did not know personally, and Lieutenants Liedig, von Beulwitz, and Henrich—three fresh, unstoppable officers—I also came to know through his staff.

A large portion of the academic youth in Munich belonged to Ehrhardt's brigade, as well as later to Organization C (Consul); Ehrhardt also had a strong following in the other university towns.

In terms of military discipline, the O.

C., in terms of military discipline, was one of the best military units at the time.

In the Freikorps and later in the Oberland League, Captain Römer had established an organization that extended throughout Bavaria and gained a foothold in the broadest strata of the population.

It was deployed in the Ruhr region in 1920 and played a commendable role in the fighting in Upper Silesia in 1921, particularly in the storming of Annaberg, where Captain Oesterreicher distinguished himself.

The volunteer associations that had been deployed during the Kapp Putsch and in the Ruhr region were originally closely modeled on the Reichswehr.

Lieutenant Colonel Schemmel rendered outstanding service to their organization.

One of their most prominent leaders was Major von Godin, commander of a battalion.

Later, the units were consolidated under Colonel von Lenz.

In Northern Bavaria, Captain Heiß had formed a unit of his own initiative in Nuremberg: the Reichsflagge, whose internal organization and cohesion were superior to those of most existing units at the time.

If the Council Republic was not proclaimed in Northern Bavaria in the spring of 1919, as it was in Munich, it is solely and exclusively due to the historical connection of this officer, who kept Nuremberg in check with his battalion.

Messrs. Ewinger and Schneppenhorst, who constituted the so-called General Command, would not have been able to prevent this development.

I myself met Heiß in Munich through Dietrich Eckart.

Soon we were as close as two peas in a pod.

I not only formed a close friendship with him, but also established a close working alliance with him, just as I had with Major Hofmann in Passau.

I took part in many Reichsflagge events and repeatedly accompanied Heiß on promotional trips throughout Franconia.

One day, Captain Heiß gathered some Reichsflagge members in Munich, invited me to join them, and persuaded me to found a Munich local group of the Reichsflagge.

Since I was very overburdened with work, I was very reluctant to take on this task.

Only after much resistance did I allow myself to be persuaded.

Once I had gathered a small following and saw their loyal devotion, I became fully absorbed in the cause.

Among the first to join my cause were Brey and Kugler, two particularly battle-hardened fellows who stood by me in the most loyal companionship from the day they joined.

Much earlier, a circle of like-minded comrades—almost exclusively soldiers from the Reichswehr and the old army—had joined forces with me under the “black-white-red” banner.

We met alternately in larger coffeehouses, wore black-white-red badges, and considered it one of our tasks to make the restaurants we frequented more “nationalistic.”

When we struck up the “Flag Song” and had it played, all the guests enthusiastically joined in, standing up.

If anyone had different views, we gave them a little nudge in the right direction.

Captain Seydel, above all, remained loyal to the flag.

I had formed a close bond of camaraderie with Seydel during our time together at the military academy; during maneuvers and in the early days of the war, we had spent a great deal of time together, as his regiment, the Royal 3rd

Field Artillery Regiment Prince Leopold, was part of the same corps.

Throughout the entire war, he was, as the chairman of an officers' association once wrote of him, "admittedly always deployed only at the front."

After the war, our shared political views brought us together again, and we became inseparable friends.

He is one of those men to whom only a uniform fits, never civilian attire—both outwardly and inwardly.

Of the other comrades, Major Fürholzer, the well-known commander of the Iron Battalion of the Heavy Artillery, was always there, followed by Captain Negler, Major Vagus, Major Fehn, Captain Weiß, and my high school friend Trutter.

To celebrate His Majesty the Emperor's birthday, I gathered the flag and its friends together on January 27,

1922, I gathered the Fahne and its friends at Witter's Meinstube on Barer Street.

An exceptionally large number of guests had accepted the invitation.

The "Münchener Post" reported on it: "A select circle of light-blue Imperial Guards officers, led by General von Epp, held a patriotic reunion without ladies.

The Tugendbund of 1812 met over bread and water, while the Fähnlein der Weißblauen Aufrechten gathered in elegant, fourth-rate wine bars.

Also present were: Police President a.

D.

and full-time political kingmaker, part-time member of the Bavarian Supreme Court, Mr. Ernst Pöhner; the alleged separatist 110 Pittinger as an expert in military organization; the Most Reverend Mr. Stempfle, a controversial professor and future field chaplain of the Greater Bavarian Army, etc.!" That did not, however, hit the nail on the head; for the mere presence of nearly all the O.

C.

proves that it was not a white-and-blue, but a black-white-red holiday that was being celebrated.

Nevertheless, it was clear from the friendly dedication that our small community had already made its mark.

From this circle, we founded, once again together with the O.

C., the Munich local chapter of the National Association of German Officers.

From the bylaws that I provisionally drafted for the local chapter, I would like to reproduce the first three articles here: 1.

The N.

D.

O.

is a national combat association of officers who wish to uphold the great tradition of the Royal

Army, remain loyal to their ancestral sovereign, and wish to devote all their strength to the purification and renewal of the German people and fatherland. 2.

The N.

D.

O.

Seeks to uphold among its members the rightful sense of professional pride of the officer, the true pride in the immortal achievements of the officer corps in war, and also the noble task of the officer to be a leader and educator of the people in times of peace. 3.

The N.

D.

O.

However, it equally rejects any spiritless professional arrogance and, especially today, sees the officer's most noble task as working and fighting shoulder to shoulder with all fellow citizens, regardless of rank or profession, for Germany's liberation.

I cite these first three articles of the statutes here because they succinctly express what I regard as the duty and office of the officer in the state after 1918.

At my suggestion, Major Fehn assumed the chairmanship of the local chapter.

Under his capable leadership, the organization grew to considerable strength.

If it subsequently failed to live up to what its founders had promised, this was due to Fehn's later misguided attempt to force the impetuous youth into the ideological fold of the older generation, namely the generals and dignitaries.

Fehn, the colonial warrior who had also spent a long time in captivity, simply lacked the stirring and sweeping experience of the stormtrooper and fighter on the home fronts.

Today, three generations stand opposed to one another within the German people: the older generation, which has not yet come to terms with 1866 and 1870; the current generation, which embodies the experience of war; and the younger generation, which did not participate in the war as combatants; or, to put it in military terms: the generals, the front-line soldiers, and the recruits.

To all of them, in their own right, fall special tasks in the struggle for the renewal of the fatherland.

While the recruits must remain humble until they have outgrown their apprenticeship, the generals are to safeguard and proclaim the sacred legacy of the spirit of the Old Army.

No soldier will fail to show them the due respect; but they must not forget that they are the heirs of the officer's and soldier's spirit that Frederick the Great and William I

.

These shining examples of German soldierly virtue par excellence, however, did not demand willful and unbridled subordination, but above all honor and duty, strength of character, and personality from the soldier.

The 27 Bavarian generals who later supported General Ludendorff, and the other German generals who did not oppose this course of action, did not serve well the preservation of the military tradition handed down by those soldier-princes.

Moreover, they have opened a rift that can hardly be closed.

Generals, front-line soldiers, and recruits must understand and respect one another, but they must observe the boundaries that have been set. "The old is crumbling, times are changing, and new life is blossoming from the ruins!" The Bavarian Army has been the Prussian Army; the war has inscribed its glorious name in the book of history for all time: from the World War and its aftermath, the German Army must rise, rejuvenated.

Our fathers and grandfathers were first Bavarians and then Germans: we and our descendants want to and must be Germans first and foremost. 20.

Aide to General von Epp.

The time has not yet come to provide an exhaustive account of the history of the operational area that I established and directed as a General Staff officer under Colonel von Epp.

The work has been completed; however, its publication must be reserved for a later date.

I wish only to preface this by saying that my work would have been impossible and fruitless had I not had the good fortune to serve under a commander who combined superior skill and fearless courage with a deep love for his country.

Colonel von Epp was promoted in accordance with his length of service and had to exchange the rank of colonel, which had become dear to him and had been conferred upon him by His Majesty the King, for the republican title of general.

He received Ebert’s handwritten letter informing him of the promotion with mixed feelings.

Bavaria owes its rescue from the turmoil of the Council—a fact that, of course, is no longer welcome to hear today—primarily to this brave officer.

When the situation was dangerous and it was a matter of risking one’s life, “they” were glad of his work and praised him, albeit reluctantly.

Once the danger he posed had been averted, he had to make way for others.

It was the same here as it always is everywhere: one person fights for a position, while others reap the benefits.

Those who fought for a Germany of “peace and order” and thereby established this republic—which they did not intend—are today all in the background or are even ostracized and persecuted by the current guardians of the republic; those who knew how to wait have taken the seats that are no longer in danger.

The Freikorps officers, in particular, could tell a story here.

In numerous cases, they were pushed out, and those who watched the entry into Munich from their windows in their nightgowns now sit in their place.

By forming the Freikorps, which had passed its baptism of fire in the battles for Munich and in the Ruhr region, General von Epp had successfully laid the foundation for the Bavarian Reichswehr.

In addition to training and consolidating the troops, his focus in the coming years was on maintaining the defense and waterways.

He had entrusted this area to me to manage.

General von Epp provided the broad guiding principles; in the details, I was to carry out my duties to the best of my knowledge and ability, taking responsibility for my own decisions.

A number of young, responsible, patriotic East Germans, whose names I have already mentioned, placed themselves at my disposal.

With their help, I succeeded in carrying out a project that was to become of significant importance not only within the narrower framework of the Bavarian Reichswehr, but also gained a decisive influence on the fate of Bavaria.

After Chairman Dr.

Schetter, chairman of the Reichstag’s Foreign Affairs Committee, who had brought charges against me for misconduct toward Dr.

Paul Levi, M.

D.

N., officially stated upon inquiry (stenographic record of the report on the 24th

meeting of the 27th (Beme) Committee on October 11, 1926, page 11), that the events of those years are no longer subject to secrecy, I shall not deny myself the opportunity to lift the veil on some events of that time to the extent that I deem permissible.

However, I am not yet able to decide at this time to make full use of the carte blanche granted by Dr.

Schetter, I am, however, not yet able to bring myself to do so at this time.

As mentioned above, the documents have been prepared for later publication and are stored in a secure location.

Patriotic men, especially in the countryside, but also within the walls of Munich itself, had taken it upon themselves to save parts of the military equipment—which, according to the provisions of the enemy alliance, had to be disposed of by the army—from destruction and to take them into careful custody.

Yet the Reich Law on the Disarmament of the Population of 1920 already dealt the first blow against this patriotic activity.

The law threatened those who did not report secret stockpiles to the authorities with imprisonment for up to five years.

Admittedly, most custodians were not intimidated by this legal threat.

Some, however, now saw a catch in the matter, and it became necessary to clear out these caches and store them elsewhere.

Given the threat of punishment, finding new storage locations was naturally very difficult.

Added to this was the fact that Berliners felt the need to meddle in Bavarian water affairs.

Opposition arose across the board.

The Bavarian Home Guard’s provincial leadership was also required, under the Drainage Act of September 1920, to conduct an inventory and certification of its water resources and to surrender surplus agricultural equipment to the Reich’s water delivery offices and the Entente’s Drainage Commission. 4 A Following the Treaty of Spa, the activities of the “Inter-Allied Military Control Commission” intensified.

The Reichswehr, whose reorganization following the upheaval of March 1920 was led by General von Seeckt, was surrounded by a network of enemy surveillance agencies.

The difficulties of maintaining a serviceable force despite enemy surveillance grew considerably as a result and were not overcome uniformly by all units.

Traitors and gossips caused much harm.

The situation is perhaps best illustrated if I include here the draft of an order, the issuance of which I requested from my commander in October 1920.

However, it was not issued in exactly this form.

Subject: Surveillance of the Army by the Entente Forces.

The enemy is in the country.

Z The J.

M.

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K.

Those who are maintained at our expense in the cities officially ensure that the harsh and humiliating provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, to which the German Reich government has once again submitted itself, are carried out to the letter.

To the mockery of all optimists and pacifists, however, their actual goal—which they pursue with iron consistency—is that our small mercenary army, in which they still fear the spirit of the great victorious army, should collapse.

We must be fully aware of this fact.

After the collapse, courageous and patriotic officers and soldiers have, from the ruins of the Old Army and out of nothing, once again forged a combat-ready force. 3 8 In spite of all opposition, we must continue to work on the personnel and material maintenance and consolidation of this force.

Officers who are unwilling to devote their entire being to this goal, and who view the defense forces merely as an economic supply agency, are out of place and must be removed.

In a time when every word and every document is subject to surveillance by enemy spies, officers cannot expect to be ordered on every single matter. 3 Under current circumstances, some orders simply cannot be obeyed that would have been obeyed without question before and during the war.

K Under the constraints of the peace treaty, some orders must also be given that are dictated to us by the enemy.

I must now demand that the commanders who were transferred from the glorious old army to the Reichsheer exercise the judgment to recognize this in each individual case.

On January 1, 1921, the German Armed Forces were reduced from 200,000 men to 100,000.

An immense organizational effort had to be made by all command posts, by the General Staff officers

and adjutants, to carry out the reduction without too much damage or hardship.

Officers and enlisted men had to be put out on the street because it pleased the enemy and because the German negotiators lacked the strength to stand firm to the very end.

In vain did the patriots hope to hear the word “No!” from the German government.

Once again, the word “No” was not uttered.

The Greek historian Thucydides once said: “The reason the Persians have always been slaves and will always be slaves is that they cannot say the word ‘No.’” When will a German “No” finally show the world that Germany is not willing to follow the Persian fate?

The reduction in troop strength naturally extended to supplies and equipment as well.

On January 1, 1921, General von Epp assumed command of the infantry as commander of the Bavarian military district.

He was now in command of the 3 infantry regiments (12 battalions) and the 7th Engineer Battalion.

His activities therefore now extended to the infantry garrisons throughout Bavaria.

The land surveys required by the army reorganization were carried out in agreement with the Reich Trust Company.

In the process, I came to know and appreciate Captain Winter, a patriotic and responsible German man.

Together with him, I waged a tenacious struggle—hidden from the eyes and ears of the general public—against the Entente and its rabble of sympathizers within our own country.

But even this did not last: the ultimatum from the Allied Powers forced the Imperial Army to make a further reduction in its equipment. Six fortresses in the east were stripped of all their equipment; Königsberg was demilitarized according to special plans; for the overall equipment of all troops, the Inter-Allied Military Control Commission drew up special equipment plans.

The implementation of General Nollet’s directive of May 12, 1921, again required the mobilization of all forces to ensure that irreplaceable national assets were preserved from destruction.

After even the submachine guns had fallen victim to the fear of the “victorious” enemies as the last of the special equipment, we now focused our attention primarily on the equipment and vehicles.

In particular, we tried to save the valuable optical equipment; however, destruction could not be avoided for the most part.

It is obvious that the resistance efforts carried out throughout the country displeased the Entente authorities.

Without the tacit tolerance and support of Entente officers—who, as chivalrous officers, understood our situation and therefore treated us with respect because we stood up to them—scandals would likely

have occurred frequently.

In particular, some Italian representatives and also some English officers carried out their duties with dignity and tact.

I cannot refrain from naming Italian Major Grammacini here as a model of the chivalrous adversary.

From time to time, when opposition had been too vigorous in any particular instance, stern notes 82 115 from the chairman of the Inter-Allied Military Control Commission in Munich, Colonel Pallieri, were sent to the head of the German Liaison Office.

For example, it states:

B.

In a letter dated June 30, 1921, “it was determined that during an inspection of the scrap metal collected by the 19th

Infantry Regiment, it was found that barely a small portion of the water reported as handed over could be reunited with the scrap.”

Of course, there was no shortage of betrayal either.

However, some reports from informants and so-called German gentlemen who wanted to betray the ammunition depots to the Entente never made it as far as the Entente officers, but merely reached our surveillance agencies.

Many a loyal citizen who wanted to personally carry out a fine act of treason poured out his heart to a fake Entente officer.

Instead of hard cash, his reward was behind prison walls.

It is not yet time to proclaim the merits of a man who used his skills here and watched over the welfare of the fatherland, while the brave petty bourgeois sleeps the carefree sleep of the righteous.

Now, there are also some noblemen who had betrayed secrets to the Entente and were allegedly killed. “Political murders,” they say today—and the philistine shudders just hearing the word.

A concerned statesman once came to Police President Pöhner’s office and told him in a whisper: “Mr. President, there are political assassination organizations!” “I see, I see,” the latter replied, “but there aren’t enough of them!” It is characteristic of New Germany that, after about six years, a special “Feme Committee” was established by the Reichstag.

This committee sees its task as tracking down the men who, many years ago—because the laws offered no recourse—acting on their inner sense of justice, sent vile scoundrels from their ragged lives to their deaths.

They have been held accountable retroactively, and have even been sentenced to imprisonment and death.

General von Epp, who was summoned to appear before this tribunal for questioning on October 11, 1926, did not shy away from calling a spade a spade.

I, too, could not withhold my opinion on this matter from the committee.

A great idea, whose champions and fighters are ready to risk their lives, will always entail and demand bloodshed.

Party functionaries, whose business is politics, will of course never understand this: their motto is not blood, but gold.

The aforementioned liaison office of the Army Peace Commission, headed by Major Vogl, waged an honorable struggle for the best possible preservation of the army's assets.

This officer, whom I had already come to appreciate as a General Staff officer on Colonel von Epp's staff, was the right man for this difficult post.

He spared no effort, fought with determination for German interests, and thereby earned the high regard of the Entente.

I do not wish to omit mention here of the support provided by the organs of the Munich Police Department, which intervened swiftly and decisively wherever it was necessary to defend German rights and put a stop to the activities of traitors.

In 1921, the defense of Upper Silesia called German volunteers, including the Bavarian Freikorps Oberland, to arms to defend German territory against Polish greed and rapacity.

The insolent Pole withstood the not-unfamiliar German blows.

Many guns and vehicles also rolled from Bavaria into the theater of war; in Munich itself, special supplies of military equipment were made available on call to the leadership of the self-defense forces.

To my delight, my assistance—which I could unfortunately only provide from afar this time—was recognized through the awarding of the "Silesian Eagle."

The Bavarian armament offices also fell victim to the Entente's demands.

On June 15, 1921, the three Bavarian Armory Offices in Bamberg, Munich, and Ingolstadt were dissolved, and the entire staff was given notice or dismissed.

The Bavarian military district was assigned to the Kassel Armaments Office; part of the holdings of the Bavarian Armaments Offices was transferred to the new office, while the rest was to be surrendered and destroyed.

When I arrived in Ingolstadt in June as an accompanying officer to General von Epp, I took this opportunity to visit the local supply office.

I found an office that was fully equipped in every respect, with its workshops having only recently been

modernized.

Even after the transfer of the holdings to Kassel and the handover to the R.

T.

G.

goods, supplies worth 20 to 25 million Reichsmarks were still available.

Many officers and lower-ranking officials (quartermasters and watermasters with 20–27 years of service, who had to leave their life's work behind) were particularly hard hit, as were some 300 selected and capable foremen and workers, some of whom had served in the office for decades.

Immediate action was required here.

The situation was similar in Bamberg and Munich.

General von Epp agreed to the proposals I submitted to my commander to avert major damage.

The state leadership of the Bavarian Home Guard and the Bavarian state government helped bring them to fruition.

Of the men who, in faithful cooperation with me, supported me to the very end in the great tasks that had to be accomplished, I wish to mention above all: Masor Faber, a man who loves his fatherland dearly and who, despite many younger men, applies his strength wherever he believes he can be of service to the German people and fatherland; a conscientious and reliable officer of the utmost dedication to duty.

Then there is Quartermaster Rubenbauer, a duty-bound assistant of noble character who managed the extensive financial affairs with prudence, security, and conscientiousness.

Lieutenant Salcher of the 19th Infantry Regiment performed quite effectively in his position at that time.

Outside Munich, Lieutenant Münst in Swabia and Quartermaster Zimmerer in Chiemgau, in particular, were active with exemplary dedication to duty.

In Munich, I had established a large equipment depot from which many useful items for agriculture, particularly vehicles, harnesses, and stable supplies, could be supplied.

In an ironic twist of fate, I also largely equipped the re-established mounted unit of the Schutzmannschaft with riding gear and harnesses.

The commander of the unit expressed his official gratitude to me in two letters; the mounted civil guards themselves expressed their gratitude even more eloquently by, in November 1923 and on April 1,

April 1924, they attacked my supporters and friends using the equipment I had provided.

In the meantime, the Baperllhe local defense force had developed into a powerful force.

It had already become a decisive power player in Bavarian politics by the course of 1920.

Furthermore, with the founding of the Orgesch (Escherich Organization), Forstrat Escherich had also gained a foothold in the rest of Germany; to the south, he extended his influence through the Orka (Kanzler Organization) into Austria, particularly Tyrol.

Chief Surveyor Kanzler, who had made a name for himself as an organizer in the Chlemgau region and who then joined Escherich as deputy governor, deserves special credit for the development of the defense forces.

Alongside Kriedel's creative energy—who knew how to masterfully expand and lead the extensive organization—a number of valuable personalities emerged within the provincial leadership staff.

My wartime schoolmate and friend, Captain Schenk, formerly of the Royal 2nd

Sanitary Regiment, who headed the News and Press Department, was a particularly capable and clear-headed individual who stood far above the average.

He found in Captain Seypdel a determined and understanding colleague; Dr.

Müller headed the legal department with great understanding.

On many important issues, the state leadership was advised by attorney and in-house counsel Dr.

Guthmann, a particularly capable and energetic man, served as an advisor.

At the helm of Munich's E.

W.

was Mayor Kühner, ably supported by his assistant, Major Fuchs.

The fall of 1920 was marked by major demonstrations of the power of the Einwohnerwehr.

In many places, large gatherings and district shooting competitions were organized.

The state shooting competition of the Bavarian Einwohnerwehr in the capital, Munich, on September 26,

September 1920 was intended to show the whole world how unshakable the resolve of the Bavarian government and the Bavarian people was to defend the internal power and order gained here against the enemy with everything they had, to the very end.

Nothing else could have been the meaning and purpose of this mighty march.

This was the guiding principle of the speeches addressed to the crowd; with this conviction, one

hundred thousand fighters raised their hands to the sky in an oath.

Only when the leaders were carried by this cold determination were they permitted to have the troops line up for the general roll call.

They were not.

The men who held the fate of Bavaria in their hands were overcome by fear of their own excessive initial courage and locked the Bavarian lion back in its cage.

On March 13,

March 1920, Bavaria had failed the man who at that time could have decisively turned the tide of Germany's—not Bavaria's!—fate. 5 1 When, shortly after the Great Fanfare on Munich's Königsplatz, Berlin demanded surrender, the "proud" response was: the resignation of the leaders and the dissolution of the People's Militia.

Kahr and Escherich, who had demanded the Oath of the Hundred Thousand but had simultaneously pledged their word to it, agreed to the dissolution.

The deputy Dr.

Held demanded on behalf of the coalition parties that the Einwohnerwehr disband voluntarily "to save the Kahr Ministry."

At the end of May 1920, the district and regional leaders of the Einwohnerwehr gathered and, with a few exceptions (Pittinger, Lenz), bowed to these parliamentary demands in hopeless self-surrender.

At the same time, the people who had "known everything beforehand and always said so" stepped forward and declared how "unwise" and "unpolitical" the Einwohnerwehr's marches had been, especially on September 26.

September.

For the most part, these were the very same people who had previously been brimming with enthusiasm. 088 "Courageous and full of a spirit of sacrifice," the Einwohnerwehr now disbanded as quickly as possible—"to keep the peace."

Truly a goal of staggering magnitude!

Escherich withdrew; Kahr, of course, followed suit after a few months.

They did not lose; for they did not fight.

They did not dare to fight at all, but surrendered immediately.

Naturally, "for reasons of foreign policy!" Otherwise, terrible things would have befallen Germany, says the "level-headed" politician in an air of importance.

The expression of the “level-headed” politician; the philistine hears it with a shudder and trembles with fear and worry.

Dietrich Eckart once said so poignantly: “The average non-Jewish person is named Kahr; let us consider this!” Rarely have the statesmen of a country been given so many opportunities to throw the weight and strength of their state into the German balance at a decisive moment as the post-revolutionary representatives of Bavarian state power.

Not once did they live up to their German mission.

The fighters for the people and the fatherland repeatedly offered their services to the “national” Bavarian government; it consistently rejected them. “The struggle against Berlin”—it would have been better to say: the struggle for Berlin—could have been waged at any time under the black-white-red flag—the “national” Bavarian People’s Party did not want to. Let us hear no more of this whining about “Anitarism” and “Berlin economy,” etc.

Come on!

No one believes these crocodile tears anyway, and the slogans are just empty chatter and rhetoric. 119 The “sovereignty of the states” and “federalism” are concepts of the past—thanks to the courageous cooperation of the sovereign, federalist Bavarian state leaders.

Resistance against Berlin would always have been possible, if only there had been a sincere will to do so.

Today, as with all major issues in this era devoid of ideas, the dispute is solely about financial interests.

The proponents of the unified state want it because it is “cheaper”; its opponents reject it because they stand to lose influential and lucrative posts.

The German state of the future will be built only by the fighters; with their help, state-forming forces, just as Prussia once bestowed upon the German fatherland, will establish and structure the Third Reich.

How this state of today is shaped and disfigured in its form seems to me quite irrelevant for the German future. In 1921, things were still different; the fighters stood ready.

That Bavaria did not make use of them is its tragic fault, for which history will not acquit it.

Is it any wonder, then, that a Bavarian patriot who feels German through and through—such as President Pöhner, whose statesmanlike services to Bavaria in particular can certainly not be disputed—should, after many disappointments, have uttered the angry exclamation: “I couldn’t care less about Bavaria!” In a similar vein, even before the war, a Minister of War who had rendered great service to Bavaria and enjoyed the special favor and grace of his Royal Highness expressed his displeasure in these words: “We Bavarians have the misfortune that there are still Tyroleans besides us!” With which that high-ranking officer expressed the realization that the Bavarians, no less than their arbitrarily designated German kinsmen in Austria, seem to be denied a leading role despite all their good qualities.

This painful realization cannot be suppressed, especially by the Bavarian who loves his fine homeland and is proud of it, when he surveys the unbroken succession of missed opportunities that would have

virtually handed the leadership of Germany to a Bavaria conscious of its historical mission.

The Home Guard was sacrificed; on September 21,

September 1921, Kahr resigned.

Count von Lerchenfeld became Bavarian Minister-President.

Escherich, who cannot be said to be free of blame for the course of events—even if the primary responsibility lies with Kahr—retired to the background.

Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, to whose superior organizational skills and tireless work the vigorous expansion of the Home Guard was entirely due, withdrew, disappointed and embittered.

It was again to the credit of General von Epp, the steadfast supporter of the local militia, that he supported the discouraged and leaderless forces, which were floundering after the dissolution and collapse, with advice and practical assistance.

In those days, Attorney Dr.

Müller of the Civil Defense Command staff, who worked tirelessly to facilitate the consolidation of forces.

In Dr.

Pittinger, who had served as district leader of the local defense force in Regensburg, he believed he had found the man who could take command of the scattered forces.

Escherich handed over command to trustworthy hands, to Dr.

Pittinger.

Supported by attorney Dr.

Müller, set about building a new organization with his former Regensburg chief of staff, Lieutenant Colonel Schmitt, and Lieutenant Colonel Schad.

He succeeded in raising the necessary funds, and after a series of discussions and meetings—in which General von Epp and I usually participated as advisors, and at times also Pöhner and Kahr—a new defense force was established, which later received the name “Bund Bayern und Reich” (League of Bavaria and the Reich).

The majority of the leaders of the Bavarian Home Guard units joined the new alliance, trusting in the names of Epp, Pöhner, and Kahr.

Only a few districts remained loyal to Escherich.

Kahr had once again assumed his office as Government Prefect of Upper Bavaria, which he had retained.

Pöhner, who made no secret of his bitterness over the turn of events, one day had a notice posted on the streets of Munich in which he publicly announced and explained his resignation as police president.

The “Neue Zeitung,” the organ of the Munich communists, assessed the situation within the Patriotic Circles at the time as follows (excerpt): “The first thriving campaign organization in Bavaria is the organization of Dr.

Pittinger.

P.

Took over after the official dissolution of the E.

W.

command of the best-organized provincial units and ensured their continued existence.

The Chief of Staff is First Lieutenant Schmitt.

His Excellency Baron von Stetten serves as commander of the Upper Bavaria district.

The head of Lower Bavaria is Reichswehr Major (ret.) Hofmann of Passau; of Upper Franconia, Lieutenant Colonel von Gagern.

The task of these district committees is to form mixed brigades.

Water supply: The organization was supplied with water by the handsome Franz, alias Franz I.

The adjutant of the handsome Franz, Captain X, and his staff officers, Lieutenants Neunzert, Czermak, and Zech, rendered outstanding service in securing this water supply.

Since the communists do not share the views of Mr. von Kahr, who denounced the workers’ alleged water reserves to the Entente in the state parliament, we are for the time being withholding the quantity, type, and storage locations of the organization’s supplies.

All ammunition belongs to the working class.

Therefore, unlike the staunchly German Mr. von Kahr, we Communists do not denounce any weapons caches.

All the more closely do we monitor any ‘abuses.’

The goal of the Pittinger organization is: the preservation of the “pure bloodlines” against International Jewry.

The narrower goal is: Bavaria against the Reich.

And this goal of Bavaria’s independence from the Reich is to be achieved under the leadership of the

hardcore German Mr. von Kahr and even with France’s help.

The Ehrhardt Organization: The bulk of this organization is represented by “working groups” around Weilheim and in the Schliersee area; it includes various “road construction units.”

Closely linked to the Ehrhardt Organization is the group of National Socialists.

Ehrhardt’s officers are responsible for the military training of this force.

The mission of the Ehrhardt Organization is: In addition to anti-Semitic endeavors, the establishment of a better guard and security society: protection of capital and large landholdings in exchange for good pay.

A desire for the monarchy, but only to the extent that this form of government guarantees the protection of capital.

The murderers of Erzberger belong both to Ehrhardt’s naval brigade and, later, to the combat organization.

It is not uninteresting to note once again that Dr.

Heim, Pittinger’s friend, had coincidentally employed both Tilessen and Schulz in Regensburg.

Political leader of the O.

E.

is Mr. Schnitzler, alias Dr.

Habnte.

Organization Chancellor (Orka): It works in close coordination with Ehrhardt, the Bavarian Royal Party, and the Tyrolean organization of Governor Steldle.

The intellectual and political leader of the Orka is Mr. Stempfle, a distinguished professor of theology from Hohenheim.

The core group of the Orka is in Chiemgau, the favorite retreat of Mr. von Kahr and “our crown prince.”

Theologian Stempfle also serves as Orka’s courier to Hungary and Tyrol and has recently accepted Bishop Kapp, the putschist.

Could it be that even the foreigner Pacell knows Mr. Stempfle better? 0 The wife of Colonel Lenz, Munich.

Under his command are the various corps of the mobilized naval volunteers.

All of the aforementioned formations still look to Mr. Ernst Pöhner, former police president, as their

leader.

D.” One must admit that the Communists have managed to acquire quite detailed knowledge of the patriotic associations and their leaders.

In contrast to the practice of the Social Democrats, the position that no leaks of information took place for the purpose of betraying the enemy is a sympathetic one, a position that, as a rule, was not abandoned.

The conclusion drawn from their findings regarding the Patriotic Associations is also not that of the Social Democrats: to run to the “big brother” or the “qadi” in Berlin and denounce them, but rather: “all the more reason for the proletariat to wage the struggle in a united manner.”

I cannot help but have always liked this attitude on the part of the Communists.

I, too, would not have offered to reveal Communist hideouts to the press or the public; of course, I had the means of power at my disposal at the time to seize these camps if necessary.

For the most part, I contented myself with knowing about the camps and keeping them under observation.

The autumn of 1921 brought the Bavarian people, insofar as they stood on the traditional monarchical ground, yet another heavy, painful loss.

In Szarvas, Hungary, on the afternoon of October 18,

October, far from his people and his homeland, King Ludwig II, the Griffin.

Many wanderings, which the Royal Martyr had to undertake after the painful 9th

November 1918, had finally led him to the hospitable soil of the Kingdom of Hungary.

Even the noble personal physician, General Staff Physician Professor Dr.

Von Seydel, who had rushed from Munich, could no longer overcome.

Only the deceased Prince returned to his residence with royal honors.

At the national border, the deceased was received by the heir to the throne and now King Rupprecht, His Excellency von Möbl, General Epp, His Excellency von Kahr, and many other prominent figures in public life.

In Wildenwart, the body of the late Queen was laid to rest beside her deceased husband.

Amid the sympathy of the entire rural population, the funeral procession carried the deceased Majesties to the state capital.

In Munich, the coffins were laid in state in St. Ludwig’s Church, and on November 5,

November 1921, on the anniversary of the coronation that had taken place eight years earlier, they were escorted in an overwhelming funeral procession through the streets of the Residenz to the cathedral.

Nearly all of Munich paid their respects once more to the deceased royal couple.

A Reichswehr company under the command of Captain Knieß rendered military honors.

Delegations from across the country paid their last respects to the royal couple, who had been driven out by foreign rabble.

Archbishop Cardinal von Faulhaber spoke moving words of farewell.

Once again, fate knocked at Bavaria’s door.

Not only Munich, but the entire Bavarian people, far beyond the borders of the so-called right-wing circles, had made a loud declaration of their commitment to the idea of the monarchy.

If ever there was a time to make amends for the crime of November 9,

November 1918.

Now was the time to act.

Had the now rightful King Rupprecht driven from the Cathedral to the Residence to issue a proclamation there that he had now resolved to ascend the throne of his fathers and take the reins of his country’s government into his own hands, a roar of jubilation would have swept through Bavaria and beyond, throughout Germany, and no one would have been able to oppose him.

The fates of men and nations are decided in moments; whoever fails to seize fate when it comes to him, it flees from him and never returns.

King Rupprecht limited himself to stating that he had succeeded to his father’s rights.

But the king made no use of his rights.

His advisor, however, was none other than His Excellency von Kahr.

With melancholy thoughts, I watched the day draw to a close.

I was moved not only by grief for the late king and the gracious commander of my regiment, for the hereditary prince of my homeland, to whom I had always remained loyal; even deeper was my disappointment that this day, which could have erased the shame of November 1918 from the annals of Bavarian history, was coming to an end in vain.

Captain Römer, who this time felt called to the role of “savior of the fatherland,” had kept a portion of his Freikorps on unnecessary standby to crush the impending royal coup.

The Reds couldn't even believe that it had all really been just a dream.

After this missed opportunity, the demand for the election of a president—which later recurred frequently in the “patriotic” press—no longer frightened the Marxists.

The beginning of 1922 brought no significant events.

The “boiling popular spirit” had quickly come to terms with Kahr’s departure and the leadership of the democratic People’s Party Count Lerchenfeld. 123 The Pittinger Organization, as the strongest patriotic association in Bavaria, gained ground and consolidated its position.

It had overcome its initial growing pains and was no longer subject to the police persecution it had suffered in the beginning.

The organization’s headquarters were moved to Möhlstraße, where Dr.

Pittinger and his entire family took up residence.

Pittinger also maintained close ties with Hungary and Austria at that time; Lieutenant Colonel Hörl played a leading role in the organization of the Austrian self-defense movement.

These ties, however, earned the Medical Council the accusation that the u.

D.

August Abel publicly accused him of seeking to tear Bavaria away from the Empire and incorporate it into a Danube Confederation under the protection of France.

Captain Römer, at that time still commander of the Oberland Freikorps, also leveled the same accusation against Dr.

Pittinger.

According to his sworn statement, the latter is said to have told him: “We must not shy away from temporarily separating ourselves from the Reich under the protectorate of France.” The Oberland organization was consequently in sharp opposition to Pittinger.

In my collaboration with Pittinger at that time, I found no evidence to justify the accusations, all the more so since City Councilor Escherich later dropped the suspicion he had expressed in this regard in October 1921.

Rather, I was opposed at the time to the leadership of the Oberland—which, in addition to Captain Römer, was held by Major Horadam—since I was unable to gain clarity regarding the path and goals of the organization’s leaders.

I did, however, always have to acknowledge the drive with which Römer led his unit and knew how to assert himself.

N.

S.

D.

A.

P.

Continued its momentum.

On January 29, 1922, the movement held its first party convention in Munich.

However, its growth did not meet with the approval of the Bavarian state government.

Minister of State Dr.

Schweyer stated in March 1922 in the Bavarian State Parliament: “Hitler’s expulsion is currently being considered.”

However, this announcement sparked such a storm of indignation far beyond the ranks of the Hitler movement that the state government preferred not to discuss this matter further for the time being.

It was particularly the soldiers at the front who spoke out loudly and resolutely in defense of their comrade Hitler, who had rushed to the German flag as a war volunteer, fought for Germany for four years, and had earned the E.

K. 1, spoke out loudly and manfully.

Admittedly, this appeal to military merit was a concept to which Count Lerchenfeld’s Bavarian government was more than a stranger. “Equally to the right and to the left” was the ultimate wisdom that Count Lerchenfeld proclaimed as the fine governing principle of the “middle line.”

A policy of the center in a state where the aftershocks of the Revolution still reverberate must necessarily lead to a policy of vacillation.

One can only govern by pitting the right against the left or the left against the right.

The Left, whose politics were always clearer in their goals and more consistent than so-called bourgeois politics, has always governed from the left.

Provisional Reich President Ebert, whose political will can hardly be disputed, ensured adherence to a clear line even when he appointed men to the Reich government who belonged to the so-called centrist parties.

Among other reasons, this is a major reason why the Reich government’s consistent policy in this direction has always prevailed over the vacillating policy in Bavaria.

With the fall of Kahr, Berlin had achieved a decisive victory: it used the ensuing period to bring Bavaria—though reluctant, yet not openly defiant—entirely under its control.

To this end, the Berlin rulers considered any means justified.

The “Prussian” State Secretary Weismann covered Bavaria with a network of agents and informants.

Soon he discovered “watered-down camps in Bavaria from which anyone approaching was fired upon,” and soon he ordered his officials to conduct house searches of nationalist men, as they were alleged to have helped fugitive “Upper Silesian fighters” or “Erzberg murderers” flee to Austria and Hungary.

The “fugitive Upper Silesian fighters,” however, were mostly informants of Mr. Weismann himself.

Even the “Black-White-Red” regulars’ table had aroused Mr. Weismann’s interest, as we were able to see to our amusement from a report that had fallen into our hands.

When the time was ripe, Provisional Reich President Fritz Ebert deemed it appropriate to pay a visit to the subjugated province, and on June 12,

June 1922 as a guest of Count Lerchenfeld in Munich.

The welcome, however, was not quite as warm as Ebert had likely expected.

While he was greeted at the train station with a pair of red swimming trunks, his drive through Munich —insofar as the distinguished visitor was noticed at all—was accompanied by whistles and shouts from members of the associations, who had lined the route from the station to Leopoldstraße without fail.

Shortly after this state visit, Berlin took decisive action.

The assassination of Reich Minister Rathenau triggered the long and meticulously prepared offensive.

This minister’s death was very convenient for the “rulers of the state”!

The very idea of nationalism, of which Bavaria had proclaimed itself the herald, now had to be decisively crushed.

That was the firm resolution of the International, which was working here in close collaboration with Moscow.

The Red Terror, particularly in Thuringia, was able to spread unhindered.

In Constance, Major a.

D.

Scherer, who had stood up to a horde of Red demonstrators, was brutally murdered.

Reichswehr officers who were on a training exercise in Neuenroda were mistreated.

The taking of hostages, murder, and atrocities committed by Red beasts were the order of the day.

The Marxist bigwigs did not shy away from throwing the “class-conscious proletarian” into battle for

Rathenau, the most outstanding representative of the supposedly hostile capital.

When, a few months later, German workers in the Ruhr region were mowed down by French machine guns, they strangely forgot entirely to call for similar demonstrations.

At the same time, a ruthless persecution of national associations began.

The regimental associations were banned; later, however, they were permitted again, as even the Reds recognized their harmlessness.

Numerous nationalist associations were dissolved; in particular, the O.

C., from whose ranks the men who had shot Rathenau had come, was persecuted by every means.

The Reich government submitted to the Reichstag the “Law for the Protection of the Republic,” the Civil Servants Exemption Act, and the Reich Criminal Code.

The street mob, which had been mobilized on July 18,

July 1922, had been mobilized by the Red trade unions and parties at Königsplatz in Berlin, forced the passage of the laws.

The breach of the Reich Constitution had thus been carried out by the very guardians appointed to uphold it: The constitutional amendment laws would have required a two-thirds majority of the “high house” for their adoption; the legislature and the people’s representatives set this aside out of fear of the street.

Through special courts and emergency laws, the fundamental rights of the German people were abolished.

Class rule against everything national was thus established.

All eyes in nationally minded Germany were now fixed on Bavaria.

How would the Bavarian state government respond to this coup d’état?

The Bavarian government and the state parliament recognized the Defense Act “in substance,” but reserved the right to determine the implementing regulations.

The Civil Service Exception Act was not adopted for Bavarian civil servants.

Neither the Revolutionary Tribunal (State Court) nor the Cheka (Criminal Court) were permitted in Bavaria. 5 The red mob raged; everywhere, agitation and incitement were directed against Bavaria as the stronghold of reaction and counterrevolution.

The situation escalated to such an extent that even the Reichswehr Infantry Regiment 21, which was training in Ohrdruf, was called up to Grafenwöhr.

The Reich government demanded that Bavaria rescind the restrictive ordinances.

The Socialist Working Group (see

P.

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And U.

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P.) planned, without any direct connection to the Reich government, but in cooperation with the K.

P.

D., in the event of continued Bavarian resistance, an “action” against Bavaria.

This was to take the form of a declaration of a general strike.

In addition, a transport blockade was prepared.

The Reich government was called upon to initiate armed action against Bavaria.

At the Greater Berlin Works Council meeting, which dealt with the action against Bavaria, the communist Remmelle pointed out the enormous danger to be seen in the fact that the decomposition of the proletariat was taking place from Munich through “nationalist swindling,” and that this agitation had already caused considerable confusion among the workers.

Every day that these dangerous activities were allowed to continue—thanks to the government and the weakness of the Socialist workers’ representatives—the overall situation worsened to the detriment of the proletariat, until the White terror emanating from Bavaria had once again brought the German people under the slavery of the monarchy.

Remmele’s speech was met with stormy and enthusiastic applause. 5 “Give us water!

Off to Munich!

Down with Kahr and Pöhner!”

These remarks provided clear proof of how strong Bavaria’s position was at that time and how dangerous the then-ruling national forces appeared to the Reds of all shades.

If Bavaria were to lose the conflict with the Reich government, the entire German nation—which at that time stood in Bavaria’s camp—would be decisively crushed.

But if Bavaria were to win, a decisive defeat could be inflicted on the Red advance.

The fate of Germany, the decision on whether all of Germany would suffocate in the red swamp or whether, at least in one part of Germany, the national banner would fly victoriously, lay once again

solely in the hands of the Bavarian government during those days.

Count Lerchenfeld traveled to Berlin for negotiations.

As always when it came to deciding matters of German survival, the Reich government once again threw the supposedly “endangered” foreign policy situation into the balance.

This tactic has never failed; it will never fail with the German philistine either.

Paint the most terrifying foreign policy consequences on the wall for the anxiously listening “citizen,” and he will always say “amen” to it “to prevent something worse.”

Shall I give some examples?

In the realm of foreign policy: When the German National Assembly, following the unanimous report of the peace delegation returning from Paris and Count Brockdorff’s remarks, was about to take it upon itself to reject the peace terms of Versailles, Mr. Otmar Strauss was summoned and told the intimidated representatives of the people of the enemies’ terrible plans should the terms not be accepted.

Naturally, acceptance was then the “only option,” and the “peace” treaty was signed.

Is it necessary to point out that the story was entirely fabricated, that even Foch saw no possibility of military action against Germany? (See the diary of British Field Marshal Wilson from June 1919.) On the domestic political front: When the Republic Protection Act was debated in the Reichstag, Stresemann and Fehrenbach argued that the adoption of the law was necessary for “foreign policy reasons” in light of the moratorium negotiations with France.

Was it any different with Kapp’s coup, with the disbanding of the Home Guard, and the dissolution of the Orgesch?

Was it any different on November 9,

November 1923?

General von Danner had to shoot at Germans “for foreign policy reasons”; for “the French would have occupied the Main line” if the German Revolution had prevailed!

In the past, the talk was: “The French will march into the Ruhr region” or “Oberschlesien is lost,” etc.

This time it was out of deference to the London Conference, at which the French demanded nothing more and nothing less than financial control over Germany.

The new president asked the Socialist Working Group “in view of the tense foreign policy situation” to postpone the action against Bavaria, and the Reich Chancellor persuaded the Bavarian rebels to be well-behaved and yield, given Poincaré’s stance at the London Conference.

The result was agreements between the Reich and Bavaria in which the Bavarian Minister-President dutifully yielded on all points.

Dr.

Wirth and Count Lerchenfeld signed. “The Bavarian government will withdraw its decree by August 18 at the latest

August, effective as of that day.” That was, in short, the content of the document.

The Marxist press triumphed; in particular, the “Münchener Post” noted the Bavarian government’s defeat with scornful pride.

But the nationalist sentiment in Bavaria had developed so powerfully that the widespread outrage over the capitulation was loudly expressed.

Very large delegations arrived in Munich from all parts of Bavaria, especially from Northern Bavaria, and presented their case to the Council of Ministers and the individual parties.

Particularly powerful was the public rally on Königsplatz in Munich, the strongest and largest Munich had ever seen.

Posters and leaflets in Munich had called for participation.

The National Socialists arrived in closed formations; the people streamed to the square in unprecedented numbers and filled the vast field.

When the second speaker, Adolf Hitler, took the podium, tens of thousands cheered him on.

The enthusiasm reached its peak when the leader of the N.

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A.

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said: “Bavaria is currently the most German state in the German Reich.”

At the end of the rally, tens of thousands raised their hands at Hitler’s command to vow to protect Germany from the threat of Bolshevism in Bavaria.

The rally concluded with the masses singing the “Deutschlandlied.”

That same evening, the trade unions sent the following telegram to Berlin: “The reaction in Bavaria is so strong that the trade unions can no longer control it.

Resistance is only possible if the Reich government takes action against Bavaria using all means at its disposal—the Reichswehr and the police.

Only under the cover of these measures can the trade unions in Bavaria rise up again against the reaction." The red press was now in an uproar. "Threat to the unity of the Reich," "aiding and abetting France's plans," "complicating the foreign policy situation" was the recurring refrain.

In addition, attempts were made to incite the Entente against Bavaria, claiming that it had lodged a protest with the German government against the speeches of Kahr and Schweyer in the state parliament.

The major press of the People's Party and the Democrats (Münchner Neueste Nachrichten) attempted to back down and work toward a concession by the Bavarian government.

I did not allow myself to be lulled by the surging national wave.

Fiery protests and mass rallies are certainly valuable for generating a sense of elation and are perhaps often even indispensable; but if there is no man there who, behind this superficial spectacle, carries out the practical preparations for action and is determined to act, they remain ineffective.

One need only recall the enthusiastic march of E.

W.

on Königsplatz in Munich.

Tens of thousands of rifles were raised in an oath to the heavens—a few weeks later, the demobilization and disbandment took place without fanfare, accompanied in some cases by quite shameful circumstances.

Here I saw the situation exactly the same way: they let the national enthusiasm run its course; but in the meantime, the party bigwigs were already sitting together in the party rooms to find and establish a path of compromise.

For years, the "compromise" has been the ultimate solution everywhere and always.

Under this impression, on August 13, 1922, I submitted an assessment of the situation that reflects what, in my opinion, should have happened at that time.

I attached five appendices to the memorandum: (organizational chart, appeals, immediate measures, etc.

P.) The disclosure of these appendices would go beyond the scope of these remarks.

I have not made them available to a wider circle to date.

In the introduction to the memorandum, I stated: "The negotiators in Berlin have been defeated.

It is not to be expected that the Bavarian government and the Bavarian State Parliament, which have so far failed to muster the strength to say the 'no' demanded at the outset, will now find the resolve to act.

If, however, everything that has been achieved so far is not to be lost in Bavaria, as Germany's last

anchor, then we must now break with Berlin.

It is cowardly and indecisive to always wait until others act; one must act oneself.

Therefore, the great goal is: the restoration of a strong, national Bavaria as the national focal point of Greater Germany." The memorandum then went on to address: 1.

What is necessary to achieve this goal, 2.

What is being sought, 3.

The means of power required for this, Rohm, The story of a high-ranking official 4.

The launch of the movement through a mass rally in Munich and rallies throughout the rest of the country, 5.

Agenda, content of these assemblies.

I must refrain from providing a detailed account of the memorandum at this point.

One thing was clear to me, in any case: that only a decisive act could fundamentally change the situation; but that the longer it was postponed, the more difficult its success would become.

Time will always work against us, because it stabilizes the conditions of the November Revolution.

People eventually get used to everything.

Moreover, for the fools—who will always be the majority when it comes to attitudes toward a certain state of affairs—sleep powder is distributed from time to time so that they do not awaken prematurely from their comfortable slumber.

There will be few people who have recognized the psyche of the "national" sleepers as accurately as Reich President Ebert, who was not elected by the people.

Outwardly, he adopted such a reserved demeanor that the "level-headed" and "mature" national-minded citizens of the older generation expressed the view that Ebert "wasn't really like that," "he was more of a social democrat," etc., but rather a man who was actually very misunderstood.

They were also quick, later on, when the "Magdeburg Trial" evoked unpleasant memories from the November 1918 period, to retroactively and emphatically praise the current President of the Reich for his fine patriotism.

Ebert may have smiled warmly to himself at these good people.

And when he went so far as to "elevate" the song "Deutschland über alles" to the national anthem of the Republic, there was no end to the wonder and enthusiasm. "Elevated": with this word, a Munich "national" newspaper recorded the Great Event and revelled in sheer delight.

At the time, I wrote this to those "nationalists": "'Deutschland über alles' has always been the national

anthem of nationally minded Germans!

If now the Socialists and their ilk also make it the national anthem of their republic, I am glad for the many splendid workers who, unfortunately, are still being held back more forcefully and laboriously against their will by union bosses, works councils, and similar overseers." For the "all too many," this clever move achieved its purpose.

The "Münchener Post," however, had to seriously rebuke them some time later, stating that the people were actually not worthy of this undeserved gift.

On the day of the release, the city and palace staff had put up only very sparse flag decorations.

This prompted the "entire republican-minded population" of Munich to gather their proud flags the following Sunday for a flag-raising ceremony on Königsplatz.

The Republican leader Erhard Auer called for a gathering; unfortunately, however, not everyone came, but only so few that they could have comfortably accommodated themselves in the open space in front of the Altheimereck.

The Socialists simply had no luck in Munich at that time! 130 Instead, on August 21,

August, an event took place that brought all of Munich to its feet.

Field Marshal von Hindenburg arrived for a visit in the Bavarian capital.

The patriotic associations gathered in the Hofgarten for a welcoming ceremony.

With the exception of Mr. Schützinger, Capt.

A.

D.

And "Comrade," who received a few reprimands for intruding into this circle, the ceremony will remain an uplifting memory for all participants.

Since the Reichswehr Ministry prohibited the Reichswehr from participating in this welcoming ceremony for the leader of the German Army during the war and future Reich President, the State Commander ordered the Reichswehr to be stationed on Akademiestraße.

For the old soldier, it was a heart-lifting sight when the Field Marshal, accompanied by his most loyal and best advisor Ludendorff, stepped out of the car and received the report from General von Möhl.

For a few moments, the old, victory-accustomed army came to life again: the commanding authority of the celebrated field marshal, paired with the proud strength of the youthful general.

Two men, and yet one unit!

And as the undefeated leaders of a great era marched through the ranks of the New German

Wehrmacht, every soldier stood at attention and every soldier’s eyes shone.

General Ludendorff honored me on this occasion by introducing me to the Field Marshal with a few words of praise.

I had previously had the honor of visiting the general a few times at his elegant home on Prinz-Ludwigs-Höhe.

My faithful chauffeur Beischl, who drove the car at my disposal, was particularly proud: for this day and the stay in Dietramszell, I had been allowed to place him and his car at the Marshal’s disposal.

General Ludendorff used the car that the chief of the state police kept on standby for him at all times.

In the evening, a grand reception was held in the offices of the Upper Bavarian District Government hosted by His Excellency von Kahr.

Hindenburg and Ludendorff were the subject of enthusiastic demonstrations.

On this occasion, the Field Marshal once again drew me aside for a brief conversation, along with Major Hofmann and Captain Heiß.

This day of reflection on national greatness, too, passed—like so many others—unnoticed in the daily routine.

Certainly, it should not be overlooked that Munich has reached a remarkably high level in the festive organization of impressive commemorative ceremonies.

But that is not enough.

Patriotic evenings and singing the “Deutschlandlied” will not liberate the homeland.

Nor is it to be assumed that Germany will be saved by wise women,

card players, and astrologers.

Nor with women of honor! 9* 131 The greater probability suggests, however, that our Lord God, who is usually on the side of the stronger battalions, will stand by us when we are ready to fight for our freedom.

The fact that the practical value of such celebrations for the ultimate goal—national liberation—is disputed by the overwhelming majority of the fighters is also due to the fact that the organizers never understood how to capitalize on the success achieved, or let us say it plainly: that the so-called leaders were simply not leaders.

It strikes me as if, in war, a general were to refrain from pursuing the defeated enemy after winning a battle.

But this pursuit was fundamentally neglected.

One reason why lasting success could not be achieved—and in many cases even failed to resonate within our own ranks—lay in the inadequate manner in which the Nationalists went about influencing public opinion.

This became particularly evident at that time.

While the Red press, supported by the Berlin bureaucracy, influenced the public by every means possible—even a printers' strike had to be staged in Berlin to buy time to paralyze the National press—and only the National press—the National press, for its part, faced the gravity of the situation with near-total incomprehension.

The errors of the national press were, and to some extent still are today: 2) Uncritical acceptance of biased or false reports from the Red and Jewish press as well as from the official news of this republic; p) Inadequate coverage and presentation of events in public life; e) Failure to recognize essential connections (major attacks by international Jewry and world Freemasonry on German identity); d) Insufficient or entirely absent defense against the systematic undermining of German sentiment through the distortion or ridicule of German concepts of honor and ideals: heroism, honor, honesty, chivalry, racial consciousness,

Loyalty, etc.

As early as 1921, General von Epp had once invited a small circle of nationalist men to his home to effectively counter this threat.

The aim of the discussion was to establish a correspondence and, through this, to provide the local press, especially in the provinces, with news.

The invitation was accepted by

A.

Dr.

Kühn, a writer who had already made a name for himself on several occasions, who was then also active for a short time in the aforementioned field.

In particular, I drew my commander's attention to my regimental comrade, First Lieutenant (Reserve) and high school teacher Hermann Bauer, with whom I was in close contact at the time.

Prof.

Bauer approached the task assigned to him with great skill and later expanded his field of work even further within the framework of the Pittinger organization.

His work earned him such recognition in broad national circles that, upon the merger of the patriotic associations, he was elected president of the United Patriotic Associations.

This was later followed by his election as a German-national deputy to the Bavarian State Parliament.

I cannot deny that, as president of the United Patriotic Associations, he sometimes spoke words that were not followed by corresponding actions—or, to put it more fairly, as I must admit, could not be followed given the composition of his associations.

They would therefore often have been better left unsaid.

But no one will be able to stand up and dispute his upright character, his camaraderie, and his sincere intentions.

Bauer was already able to get his first articles published in about 50 provincial newspapers.

However, a lack of funds severely hampered the evaluation and exploitation of his work.

Thus, in August 1922, when the crisis between the Reich and Bavaria was at its height, we were not yet able to convey our thoughts to the public to a sufficient degree.

The compromise provisionally concluded in Berlin on August 11

did not meet with the approval of the coalition parties.

On August 18,

Ministers Schweyer and Gürtner therefore traveled to Berlin for new negotiations.

Count Lerchenfeld, whom the Bavarian Order Bloc had accused of being on the verge of becoming Bavaria's gravedigger, could not lead the new delegation for that very reason, as he considered his hands to be tied by a secret agreement with Berlin.

In it, Reich President Ebert had committed himself to the Bavarian Minister-President that the Reich government would not take action against the Bavarian organizations known to it, which were allegedly armed.

It hardly needs mentioning here that the agreement was, of course, known to the French Embassy in Berlin on the very same day.

The "Münchener Post," which of course had to know, wrote at the time: "In welcome contrast to the Bavarian government, the truly statesmanlike handling of the matter by President Ebert has been evident in the resolution of the dispute between the Reich and Bavaria." Nationalist circles viewed the new negotiations by the Bavarian negotiators in Berlin with undisguised concern.

The Bavarian negotiators had always been outmaneuvered by the Berliners.

Those in the know were also aware that the Bavarian delegation's sole aim was to drag out the negotiations beyond the Bavarian Catholic Congress so as not to jeopardize mass participation from all regions of Germany.

This goal was also achieved.

The Catholic Congress in Munich took place with massive attendance; in an impressive speech,

Cardinal-Archbishop von Faulhaber uttered the famous words: “The Revolution was perjury and high treason.” Through this statement, proclaimed loudly and publicly, the cardinal—and, moreover, the Catholic Church—gained a secure and strong following in Germany’s nationalist circles, which they were often able to utilize to their advantage in the subsequent period.

I do not wish to conclude from the fact that the cardinal later painstakingly avoided similar statements that his superiors did not agree with this view.

In the negotiations with Berlin, the Bavarian government naturally lost. “It was bound to fail,” I wrote on August 29, 1922, “because it relied solely on its parliamentary base and had not absolutely secured the allegiance of the power factors (the Reichswehr, the state police, and self-defense forces).”

These errors in assessing the actual and effective forces, compounded by a lack of instinct in handling public sentiment and the failure to lead and harness the will of the people, seem to me to be the most significant factors.

Other glaring blunders receded into the background.

Thus it came to pass that the nationalist circles of the Bavarian government withdrew their confidence in the national reconstruction and pledged their allegiance to a separate leadership that promised to offer more.” “The safeguarding of national interests,” I continued in this memorandum, “had hitherto been entrusted to the Minister of the Interior, Dr.

Pittinger.

He had thus taken on a colossal task, which he and his staff were unable to fully accomplish.

Without wishing to belittle the work accomplished, it must be said that the task exceeded their capabilities.

This is due not only to the magnitude of the task as such, but also to the insufficient scope of action available to these men in general.

It is unacceptable to give a group of such individuals free rein in the structure and objectives of their activities, to leave it up to them to determine the timing of decisive actions, and then, depending on the success of the action, to place themselves at the head of the movement or to disassociate themselves from it.

What must be achieved is to bring about the decision, to bring about the renewal and rebirth of Bavaria and all of Germany from national disgrace and national misery.

Only the best are good enough to solve this task.

The men who enjoy the full confidence of the national class must not shirk their duty at this very moment if they wish to assume leadership in the near future.

They have a duty to commit themselves now and to take the helm at this very moment. If one holds the conviction that the implementation of the protective laws is paving the way for the Bolshevization of Germany, then danger is imminent.” “The preconditions for the preparation, initiation, and enforcement

of the remedial measures," the memorandum continued, "are present in Bavaria.

It is clear that this state is currently the only one in the German Reich where there is a possibility of halting the ruin.

The Bavarian people want recovery; they want to see decisive action that promises radical improvement.

In the recent public rallies in Munich, the voice of the people has been powerfully expressed.

Only a few thousand followed the call of the red agitator Auer for a constitutional crisis; more than 50,000 cheered the youthful leader Hitler.

Hindenburg was welcomed by the entire people, and the leader of the Catholics was able to address many thousands of believers with his powerful words.

Elsewhere in Bavaria, too, national celebrations, particularly the regimental festivals, have developed into massive rallies.

The Palatinate, through its State Commissioner, Privy Councilor Dr.

Wappes, made a solemn declaration of its loyalty to National Bavaria.

The rest of national Germany, oppressed by Jews and Margraves, looks to Bavaria to draw new strength for the common struggle from its resurgence.

The detached German territories and our brothers of German blood and tongue in Austria and the border states turn their gaze to the land that seems to be the first to be re-established as a nation.

"The enemy will only respect us again and consider a government capable of negotiation when it is strong and German and leads the people, rather than being led by the masses." These reflections culminated in specific proposals aimed at uniting all national forces.

In my view, this could not succeed at that time due to irresponsible leadership.

But the utmost haste was required, as circumstances demanded immediate action.

The Bavarian Division was stationed at the Grafenwöhr military training area at that time.

I discussed my considerations with First Lieutenant Hofmann and Captain Heiß.

The general consensus was that political pressure should be used to force the Reich government to put an end to the policy of appeasement.

In our view, leadership in Bavaria could only be assumed by the State Commander, who had to liaise with the Chief of the Army High Command.

First Lieutenant Hofmann presented our joint view to General von Epp.

General von Epp, who assessed the situation clearly and decisively, had a detailed discussion with Commander General von Möhl.

The Bavarian commander concurred with General von Epp's opinion and sent me to Munich to see Privy Councilor Dr.

Heim to convey his views and statements to him.

In his reply, Heim did not take a clear position and acted like a sphinx.

General von Möhl was at that time under close observation by foreign powers.

English newspapers, e.g.

B. "The Daily Mirror" of September 4, 1922, carried reports from Paris on the "secret mobilization" and "Bavarian troops massed for march in Munich."

However, they had obtained their information from the "Münchener Post"!

Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, who at the time was working closely with the aforementioned Dr.

Guthmann and, through him, worked closely with Berlin circles, initially wrote back to me, declining my suggestion to collaborate in our camp.

Escherich's shift toward Count Lerchenfeld and Pittinger's behavior made him averse to involvement in nationalist circles, which, as he put it, "are artificially kept apart by the ambition of their various leaders."

Even then, he pointed to the formation of a purely military organization under Heiß, including Oberland, in which "politicians must keep their mouths shut."

Munich was still in the grip of the crisis at that time.

Confidence in Count Lerchenfeld had been severely shaken in nationalist circles.

The politician Pittinger therefore now considered the time ripe to strike in Munich.

Instead of a rally originally planned for Königsplatz, he gathered his men in the Münchner-Kindl cellar.

The Reichswehr and a large number of Bavarian ministers were absent from Munich.

Thus, no competitors would have stood in the way of his desire for action.

But perhaps precisely for that reason, his confidence in his own strength waned; he decided to call off the venture and went to the Chiemgau to spend his days there for a while as a harmless hiker.

Whether his patron Kahr was particularly pleased with the outcome of this "revolution" against Lerchenfeld is beyond my knowledge.

An envoy from Pittinger had arrived in Grafenwöhr prior to the Kindl-Keller operation; I do not know to what extent he informed Generals von Möhl and von Epp of the intended measures.

Both were heavily occupied with troop exercises during those days.

I was employed here exclusively as a staff officer and avoided, as much as possible, reporting to my commander on matters that did not concern military service.

Pittinger's envoy also informed Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann and me of the matters that were to follow.

His remarks did not give us the impression that they actually knew what they wanted in Munich.

Since we saw the lack of adequate preparation and therefore rightly feared a half-hearted implementation, we firmly refused to participate.

In all seriousness, however, we did not believe in the matter at all.

We were surprised when the undertaking was actually attempted, and we could hardly be surprised at its failure.

This, however, had now created a completely untenable situation.

Pittinger had made enemies of the government and all political parties.

Within our own ranks, outrage over the leadership's failure grew, and calls for a soldier to take the helm grew louder.

At the time, I was of the opinion that Pittinger should resign as head of the self-defense associations.

Although General von Epp held Leader Pittinger and his staff responsible for the flawed and failed undertaking, he did not want to abandon Pittinger.

I believed that Pittinger's resignation as leader of the self-defense movement would, in the short term, open the possibility of an agreement and cooperation with circles that were at odds with the Medical Council.

These were primarily the Oberland, which strictly rejected his leadership, then the Orgesch and other national associations in northern Germany and Austria, as well as the valuable support of Colonel Bauer.

General Ludendorff, too, could likely have been won over as an advisor.

Finally, the O.

C., whose leader, Captain Ehrhardt, rejected Pittinger, could also be brought into the front.

Furthermore, I believed that the time was right to subject the relationship between the state and self-defense to a fundamental reorganization.

After all, following the dissolution of the Einwohnerwehr, the situation was such that organizations had formed over whose composition and use the state could exert no decisive influence.

In doing so, the state deprived itself of an invaluable increase in strength; on the other hand, self-defense lacked state support.

The issue was all the more pressing as the accelerating currency devaluation posed great difficulties for the associations, unless the state, by virtue of its authority, intervened to assist all circles dedicated to preserving the state.

This, however, would also have endangered the preservation of the salvaged material assets, which represented billions of the national wealth.

I need hardly emphasize here that, in this context, I had always considered only the state of a national character.

Since the Bavarian Minister-President did not possess the trust that forms the basis of a closer relationship between the state and self-defense.

I suggested to General von Epp that he work toward ensuring, through contact with trustworthy members of the government, that a man be chosen as successor in whom this trust could be placed.

The timing of a reorganization of affairs also seemed opportune to me because a split and a realignment of forces were taking place within the national camp.

Within the Bavarian Center Party, the stance on the Republic Protection Act and the “Völkisch” issue led to the departure of Colonel von Xylander’s group, roughly at the same time that Graefe and Wulle broke away from the German National Party in Berlin and gathered a strong following behind them.

Escherich, who wanted to re-emerge as a follower of Lerchenfeld, found no support.

His public appeal fell on deaf ears.

Opinions were divided within the Oberland League.

Valuable forces gathered in “Treu-Oberland,” later called the “Blücherbund.”

The realization of the necessity of the confrontation between the National, d.

H.

state-preserving, and the international, state-destroying factions was increasingly recognized in nationalist circles.

The conviction that this conflict could not be resolved through the incessant preaching of “peace and order,” but only through struggle, gradually, albeit slowly, took hold in the National Movement.

On the other hand, the agreement between M.

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and U.

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P.

Undoubtedly an admission of fear of the growing nationalist and ethnic movement. 5 3 World politics at the beginning of October 1922 was entirely dominated by the Turkish freedom fighter Kemal Pasha, whom France supported.

In contrast, England attempted to exert pressure on France by raising the issue of war reparations through the German Reich Chancellor; in Bavaria, events in October led to the resignation of the Bavarian Prime Minister, Count Lerchenfeld.

He was replaced by von Knilling, who had previously secured the consent of the National Circles. 5; The end of 1922 saw the R.

S.

D.

A.

P.

Hitler, who had meanwhile joined the Working Community of the United Patriotic Associations, was on the rise.

The victory of Italian fascism undoubtedly contributed to this rise.

At the same time, however, it was the well-known failure of all parliamentary parties that drove the disillusioned masses to Hitler.

I The major Jewish newspapers of the world noted with concern the impending growth of the National Socialist movement.

The Viennese “Neue freie Presse” of December 14, 1922, had to acknowledge that Hitler had become “the strongest driving force of South German nationalism from an outsider who was not taken seriously.”

The völkisch ideology advanced rapidly across the board.

The German Gymnastics Federation (1919), which comprised some 600 German-style clubs and had organized a purely German gymnastics festival in Linz in 1922, issued a circular letter at the end of the year to the affiliated gymnastics clubs of the regional federation, in which it demanded “that the

German Gymnastics Festival in Munich in 1923 be organized and conducted in a strictly ethnic spirit and be attended only by festival guests and gymnasts of German descent and Aryan origin." i 8 I had to preface this summary of the development of the political situation in the Reich and in Bavaria, as well as of the Patriotic and Nationalist movements in the years 1921 and 1922, as a basis for understanding the struggle waged by the Social Democrats to bring the Bavarian Reichswehr under their influence.

In a memorandum from December 1922, General von Epp summarized the development and state of the situation as follows: The fate of the Reich rests in the hands of the parties that, in 1917, through their political actions, broke the solidarity of the German people.

Although, for tactical reasons, the Social Democrats have not been represented in the government since Wirth's resignation, their influence remains decisive.

Moreover, since the revolution, the Social Democrats, the Democrats, and the Center Party have taken virtually the entire state apparatus into their own hands, so that even the executive branch is subject to their political will.

These parties are bound together by their shared responsibility for Germany's collapse and by the shared advantage they have derived—and continue to derive—from the revolution for their position of power.

Their work and their tool, which keeps them in power, is compliance politics: compliance politics toward the outside world, i.e.

e.g.

Yielding to all enemy demands without the will to resist; and internally, i.e.

i.e.

Constant yielding to the lust for power of Marxism and communism.

The policy of compliance is fundamentally obstructed by the national, ethnic will to resist.

Breaking this will to resist by all means at our disposal (Fate d ede) must therefore be the goal of the forces carrying out Reich policy.

Serious resistance was attempted from the outset only in Bavaria.

The national forces that emerged in bourgeois and peasant circles under the Kahr government found strong allies in Hitler's National Socialist movement among the working class. 3 Above all, however, the Reichswehr was a strong pillar and supporter of the national movement in Bavaria from the very beginning.

The establishment, strong organization, and funding of the Bavarian Home Guard would be unthinkable without the active support of the Bavarian Reichswehr.

Since March 1920, the Social Democrats in Bavaria have lost their participation in the government and thus their direct exercise of power.

However, since it shares in power at the Reich level, it is in a position to assert its influence in Bavaria through the Reichstag and the Reich government.

The Weimar Constitution provides it with the means to do so in areas directly subject to imperial sovereignty. The Bavarian Reichswehr is part of the Reichsarmee, and is thus directly subordinate to the Reich President and the Supreme Command of the Reichswehr in Berlin, and is, in accordance with the state constitution, almost entirely removed from the influence of the state.

If the SPD, supported by Berlin, succeeds in securing decisive influence over the Bavarian Reichswehr, thereby bringing the strongest power factor in Bavaria under its control and securing control over the waters, then a breach will have been opened in Bavaria's national unity and Bavaria's resilience will have been greatly weakened." The memorandum then answered the question: What has the Social Democratic Party achieved so far in this direction, and by what means?

From this section, I would like to highlight the following passage, the disclosure of which seems to me to pose no problem: "The outbreak of hostilities was preceded by a visit by Rep.

Auer to General von Epp's office in September 1921.

As a pretext for his visit, Auer cited a report allegedly sent to him from 'Berlin' stating that General von Epp had made financial contributions to the Völkischer Beobachter and the National Socialist Party.

General von Epp described these reports as false.

In fact, General von Epp had personally granted a loan to the German poet Dietrich Eckart in 1920—that is, at a time when the latter had no connection whatsoever to the "Völkischer Beobachter"—which was later repaid.

Incidentally, as if it were not the subject of the inquiry, Auer also mentioned that the secret arms depots in Bavaria were arousing suspicion among his party.

He suggested that these weapons stocks be placed under the joint control of representatives from the various parties. 139 General von Epp did not agree to this proposal; in January 1922, fierce attacks against General von Epp suddenly appeared in the socialist press, which contained the same allegations that Rep.

Auer—contained allegations made against General von Epp (support for the National Socialist Party and the "Voöltischer Beobachter").

Likewise, an interpellation took place in the following days regarding the same—alleged—matter.

F.

Shortly thereafter, Rep.

Auer addressed a lengthy indictment to Reichswehr Minister Geßler.

In it, he claimed that the Reichswehr had dispatched assault columns to destroy the “Münchener Post.” (Correct) 2 Above all, however, the water transports and the storage of water in the country were the targets of his attacks. 5 In doing so, he directed a series of personal attacks against Captain Röhm and his associates, which were completely fabricated.

Auer’s letter read: “Assault squads against the ‘Münchener Post’.”

A few months ago, a storm troop of Reichswehrmen was formed at the Hartmannshof on Hartmannstraße in Munich, tasked with, if necessary, attacking the “Münchener Post” with hand grenades.

Four burly fellows were selected for this, who were to receive the necessary equipment from Reichswehr stocks.

What do you know about this?

Who is providing the funds?

Toward the end of January, about 30 active and inactive officers, including Captain Ernst Röhm, adjutant to General Epp, gathered in Munich for a festive banquet to once again settle the water supplies from Bavaria to the Pan-Germans of German Austria and Hungary over wine and champagne.

In Munich, these Bavarian exiles meet daily at the Witterschen Weinstube, Barerstraße 55.

Captain Röhm presides.

That is also the birthplace of the murderous and violent thoughts directed against political dissidents.

Röhm, who incidentally is an ardent supporter of the Corps students, whom he had trained to shoot in the barracks, emerged as an officer from the 10th

Infantry Regiment in Ingolstadt, was assigned to the Bavarian General Staff during the war, and comes from a family of no means. ’ Röhm is a registered member of the National Association of German Officers as well as the National Socialists.

Both are strictly prohibited for active officers.

Among his close associates are: the ambitious Captain Adolf Heiß, machine gun company commander in Nuremberg, where he plays an important role in German nationalist circles; then the active Reichswehr Lieutenant Hans Salcher, son of respectable Munich citizens; Reserve Lieutenant g.

D.

Zech in Feldmoching; First Lieutenant a.

D.

Lautenbach of the Artillery, 8th

Inspector of the State Chemical Laboratory on Arecisstraße in Munich; the fugitive Lieutenant a.

D.

Santow; Mar Neunzert, Marsstraße 24, son-in-law of the well-known Chiemgau estate manager and Major Giermak, and a few others whom we will leave out of the dossier for the time being, until perhaps the Erzberg murder case should make it necessary.

For today, we shall concern ourselves only with the affairs of the Faber and Winter company in Munich, which is responsible for managing the regular operation of the state's twenty trucks and three passenger cars, nos. 4401–4427, as well as with the similar enterprise Brand and Kroneis in Nuremberg, Plärrer.

But looming over it all is Captain Röhm, followed by Captain Helß.

Both are well known in Bavaria as the "machine gun kings."

Their task is: 1.

To have weapons sought throughout the country, 2.

To have the water sources found in the country hidden and, if necessary,

to have them moved if necessary.

The main organizer for the operation in Munich was Lieutenant Salcher.

The aforementioned vehicles are used to transport the goods, even across borders, while the passenger cars are intended to assist the association officers in expediting business matters.

This relocated state property seems to us to be a very lucrative business, for the head of the entire operation, Captain Röhm, has substantial funds at his disposal. We therefore ask: 1.

Is General Epp informed of these transactions conducted by his adjutant? 2.

Is there a secret fund at the free disposal of those who traffic in state property? 3.

Is Reichswehr Minister Gessler aware of the pan-German activities within the Bavarian Reichswehr department?

It is a well-known fact that Röhm wants a military dictatorship in Germany, to which Greater Austria is to be added.

If this is not possible, Röhm is also prepared to carry this out for the time being in the so-called

Danube State, comprising southern Bavaria with German-Austria—Tyrol—Salzburg.

The transferred weapons are primarily intended for this purpose.

The discussions in Berchtesgaden and Freilassing, which are strongly supported by the parquet manufacturer Wrede, are in full swing.

The discussions cover the funding of right-wing organizations and the reestablishment of the Pan-German idea in Bavaria and among the German-Austrian tribes. The organizer of these meetings is Mar Neunzert.

Lieutenant Commander Missowid is in fine company, serving as the chief courier.

The “Miesbaher An≠ Fuel” and the “Völlische Beobachter” serve as their official newspapers.

A good friend of Röhm’s is the owner of the newspaper office on Schässlerstraße in Munich, Mr. Fürholzer, Captain (ret.),

D., commander of the Iron Battalion Fürholzer.

Now one also understands why this gentleman engages in such vigorous propaganda for these two papers in particular in the shop windows.

Among Röhm’s friends is also the leader of the National Socialist Workers’ Party, Hitler.

The assault squads for their gatherings are provided by the Reichswehr’s 19th Mortar Company.

Captain Streck is at the helm.

Almost the entire company consists of members of this National Heroes group.

The brawls at the Löwenbräukeller and Hofbräuhaus are also attributable to these shock troops.

Hitler is a frequent guest of Captain Röhm at his apartment at Aldringenstraße 4.

The question posed by the *Münchener Post* at the time—where did Hitler get the money for his sophisticated agitation, a question to which Hitler had only harsh words—is now gradually being answered.

That’s for today.

Mr. Epp will no longer be able to remain silent on this matter, as he generally prefers to do.” I would like to say a few words in response to this friendly characterization of my person: The meeting in Vienna never took place.

The accusation that I enriched myself through water diversions does not surprise me coming from this quarter.

The notion that a thing is done for its own sake cannot be expected of the imagination of a Marxist leader.

However, the former Minister of State of the Free State of Bavaria should not have failed to observe during his tenure that the authorities always entrust special administrative offices with the handling of

financial transactions.

Otherwise, he should have foreseen that this would enable me to prove that I had not received a single penny.

How fortunate for you, Mr. Auer, if you can always provide such irrefutable proof for yourself and your friends!

The memorandum then continues: “As a fellow party member, Representative Auer, the former captain in the General Staff of Military District Command VII,

Karl Mayr, who sent several reports on the ‘goings-on’ in the Bavarian Reichswehr to the Reichswehr Ministry: - Mayr’s reports, one of which concludes with the words: ‘as late as the summer of 1921, I was still unilaterally on the side of the right,’ are too insignificant to be worth reproducing here; they are on file.

Also some letters from Captain Mayr to Rep.

Auer. In the summer of 1921, the Socialist deputy Braun from Nuremberg addressed a demand to the Minister of the Reichswehr that the Social Democratic leaders be granted control over the Bavarian waterworks; otherwise, a public debate could not be avoided. Dr.

Geßler, who had apparently made certain promises to the Social Democrats, attempted twice in person in Munich, albeit unsuccessfully, to secure an agreement to the Socialists’ demands.

The enactment of the Republic’s

Protection Laws gave the Bavarian Social Democrats cause to make a new push.

Rep.

Nimmerfall, Social Democratic Party of Munich, Altbimmereck 10/IV, sent “Comrade” Köster a series of reports on a total of 70 alleged Bavarian water reservoirs with the addition: A report to the Minister of the Reichswehr is likely to yield good results, because the Bavarian military department is led by extremely unreliable officers.

At the slightest sign of the water camps becoming known, they will scatter like young cats.

Only by taking decisive action with an appropriate, reliable police force can one or another camp be dismantled, thereby preventing many future disasters caused by right-wing coups. \ 8 The State Court of Justice opened proceedings against the alleged water camps.

> A comprehensive list of alleged water camps from all over Bavaria was then published in October by the Munich Social Democratic Association, signed

Adolf Dichtl, Münden, Pestalozzistraße 400 II.

Zlmmer 50, handed over to the Chief Public Prosecutor.

A few sentences from his letter are noteworthy in this regard: “Pursuant to the Law for the Protection of the Republic, we feel compelled to issue the following notices regarding water ownership and water rights.” i } “Insofar as there is no violation of the Law for the Protection of the Republic, the aforementioned

water resources shall revert to the Reich in accordance with the Drainage Act.” “We strongly caution against allowing investigative actions to be carried out by local authorities.” x 5; “It would be advisable to entrust a Reich investigating judge with the matter.” j “In view of our legal obligation to report.” The aim of the Socialist protests is clear. 142 Since they have not yet succeeded in gaining control over the waters in Bavaria, 1 “the waters have fallen to the Reich,” thereby bringing them under control and within the sphere of influence of those in Berlin.

“We are aware of cases,” Mr. Dichtl further writes in his report to the Reich Attorney General, “in which even authorities systematically secured water sources before the Reich could seize them.” The “personalities within the authorities” naturally stand in the way of the Social Democrats in achieving their goals.

Therefore, the struggle is directed above all against their > Strongly supported by the Nuremberg Democratic Mayor Luppe, she submitted a request to the Reich Minister of Defense for the transfer of Captain Heiß from Nuremberg.

The transfer was therefore ordered by the Reich Ministry of Defense “in the national interest.”

Immediately thereafter, following repeated pressure from the Reich President, Captain Röhm was transferred from General von

Epp.

The transfers were ordered without prior consultation with the Bavarian Military District Command and without General von

Epp.

The motives and objectives are clear.

What has been achieved so far is, of course, only one step in the overall plan.

Whether its implementation will be prevented depends on what measures the government, in order to safeguard its own existence and as the guardian of the state’s interests; the patriotic associations, to preserve their living conditions; and the Reichswehr, to fulfill its unwritten patriotic duty, are willing to take.” Thus concludes General von Epp’s memorandum.

On December 5,

December 1922, the general received the following order: The following are to be transferred: Captain Röhm from the General Staff of Infantry Leader VII to the General Staff of the 7th

Division, Captain von Annefen from the General Staff of the 7th

Division to the General Staff of Infantry Leader VII.

Berlin, November 25,

November 1922.

The Minister of the Reichswehr: The Chief of the Army Command: Dr.

Geßler.

Von Seeckt.

An accompanying letter stated: “that this arrangement appears to be in the best interest of the matter and of all persons involved.” Röhm, who was to be transferred in any case on the minister’s orders, can see a transfer to the division only as a transfer “up the ladder.”

The fears expressed by General von Epp had come true in full.

The Social Democrats’ push and breakthrough into the Patriotic Front had succeeded.

Another chapter of my military life had come to a close—for four years, since the formation of the Freikorps, I had served on the general’s staff as a general staff officer and adjutant.

E 143 Furthermore, I was his closest assistant in all matters with which General von Epp was concerned as a result of the high esteem and great trust he enjoyed among the people.

Now I was separated from my commander.

General von Epp refused to assign Captain von Hanneken, who had been transferred to my position, to his area of command; I did not report for duty at the military district headquarters.

The general asked the commander to reverse the transfer.

General von Möhl, however, could not grant this request, since the transfer corresponded to a special wish of the Reich President and had, moreover, been in the works since the summer of 1922.

In his reply to General von Epp, he wrote “that Captain Röhm, even in his assignment at the military district command, should continue his previous meritorious service in full within his previous sphere of responsibility and in close cooperation with General von Epp,” and also promised since his transfer as commander of the group to Kassel was imminent, to urge the same of his successor, Lieutenant General von Lossow.

Thus, in the end, there was nothing left to do but submit to the inevitable.

That the reprimand was issued comes as no surprise.

The Social Democrats’ goal was to secure control over the arms stockpiles in Bavaria.

Since attempts to secure the loyalty of the men guarding the arsenal had failed, their first objective had

to be to neutralize these men.

The surest way to do this was, first of all, to separate these individuals; dealing with those who had been separated then presented fewer difficulties.

The first objective of the struggle had, for the time being, been completely achieved.

The Reichswehr Ministry had practically made itself the Red Party's stooge.

Since the political situation in the Reich forced it to howl with the wolves, the Ministry had to act in this manner unless it was determined to take a firm stand against the system as such.

That General von Seeckt had no such intention is evident from his subsequent behavior, right up to his resignation without resistance.

The success of the Reds' move, however, far exceeded the Socialists' expectations, as the official separation also resulted in a de facto separation.

After some back-and-forth, I had to resign my post as General Staff Officer on the staff of the 7th

Division.

I was now, on the one hand, following tradition and my inclination, under the command of the Infantry Commander, General von Epp, and, on the other hand, due to my official assignment and direct subordination, under the command of the Commander of the 7th

Division, Lieutenant General von Lossow, and to his Chief of Staff, Lieutenant Colonel Baron von Berchem.

Had the Military District Command, as the superior authority par excellence, hitherto been a kind of hostile authority before which we, the

H.

The general and I, who did not wish to lift the veil on our deepest secrets, I now belonged to this staff myself. 144 Lieutenant Colonel von Berchem was, after all, my immediate superior, and if he wanted something, I had to answer him clearly and directly.

General von Epp found my cooperation with the new authority embarrassing.

He probably believed that I wanted to gradually withdraw from his influence and became cooler toward me.

The complete trust had been shaken.

On the other hand, I had the feeling that my interests had not been fully safeguarded after all. That, too, hurt me.

Thus, a rift began to form here, at first imperceptibly.

This atmosphere of mutual incomprehension, indeed of quiet but growing mistrust, provided fertile ground for the work of the men to whom we were both a thorn in the side.

After all, some believed that I had gained too much influence.

They viewed with envy the trust I enjoyed among my superiors and that was shown to me by all patriotic circles, but they overlooked the heavy workload and responsibility that weighed upon me, and the fact that I gave my all to this service and renounced everything that life otherwise offers an officer.

Yet it was these same people who refused to acknowledge General von Epp's right to the position he claimed for himself—and which he was fully entitled to claim due to his exceptional service to the fatherland and the New Army.

Later private discussions between the General and me revealed some of these obscure figures to us.

Thus, at the end of four years of loyal cooperation in the most difficult circumstances, there was an estrangement for which I, of course, cannot absolve myself of blame.

That this temporary state later gave way once more to our former relationship of trust, I owe to the chivalrous spirit of my esteemed commander.

I had devoted a detailed discussion here to an event that kept the Reichswehr in suspense for many months and subjected it to the most severe trials: the introduction of the new Reich cockade, due to its fundamental significance.

To save space, I must refrain from reproducing those remarks here and limit myself to noting that a number of upright officers fought for the black-white-red cockade—the last symbol of the old, glory-covered army—to the very end.

Personally, since I was not in the ranks, I was able to avoid any particular clashes until my departure.

Many others, however, were worn down in their struggle and ultimately had to give up the fight, isolated and abandoned.

As a martyr to the cause, however, the new army will always have to honor the captain who chose to resign rather than submit on this issue.

He was sent into the wilderness: the fate of German men in the "German" Republic! 10 Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 145 21.

In the General Staff of the 7th (Bavarian) Division; Rubreinbrud, Upon my transfer to the staff of the 7th

Division, I also had to say goodbye to the staff of the Infantry Leader, which had grown dear to me and of which I had simultaneously been the commander.

I had specifically requested this assignment from General von Epp.

I did not want to have only clerks under my command, but soldiers as well, even if there were only a few of them.

At the staff of the 12th

Bavarian

Infantry Division in the field, I had done the same.

This way, I was at least able to go out to Oberwiesenseld or Neufreimann with the entire staff one afternoon a week to shoot and throw hand grenades.

General von Epp also used to join us for this and personally take part in the shooting and throwing.

I cannot name all the splendid officers and men who had all grown equally dear to my heart; for I would have to list them all here.

Proof of the excellent spirit and loyal camaraderie that united us is surely the fact that the staff still gathers today, usually on General von Epp's birthday, around their commander to spend a few happy hours together.

Only my brave lad, Georg Völk, who had stood by my side since May 1919—a true German soldier who loved his country and a dear, loyal comrade—accompanied me to the new staff; the brave fellow whom I had brought with me to General Epp's staff from the staff of the 12th

Infantry Division in the field, I had brought along to General von Epp's staff, I now had to leave behind there.

In Major Lift and Major Hühnlein, who, as 1st

General Staff officers serving on the Infantry Commander's staff, I had had outstanding supporters who backed my work wherever they could and were sincere comrades to me, In particular, I became close to Major Hühnlein, in whom I came to appreciate a man of such sincerity of character, unyielding determination and steadfastness, and a sense of camaraderie that far exceeded the average.

We first became closer during a General Staff training exercise of Military District VII, which took place in the Tittmoning area.

Lieutenant Colonel Baron von Berchem, who led the exercise, knew how to make it both instructive and enjoyable; a warm camaraderie united all the participants.

Mafor Heyl, who handled the mortar operations on the staff, was a capable officer of distinguished character; Captain Deß, who had served with me for a long time as an orderly officer, was a capable and reliable worker who had quickly found his footing in his new field of work as a staff officer.

He also proved himself fully as a comrade, no less than his zealous and conscientious predecessor, First Lieutenant Kleyla.

On this occasion, I would also like to mention the officers on the staff of the division and the artillery

commander, to whom I owe my inspiration and support: the noble-minded Colonel Baron von Botzheim with his tireless adjutant, Major Dollmann; the General Staff officers First Lieutenants Eberth and Endreß, whom I held in particular esteem; my regimental comrade Lieutenant Colonel Fischer; First Lieutenant Meier; Major Baumann; and the head of the Quartermaster's Office, Acting

Secret War Councilor Rudolph.

Although I often found ways and means to resolve difficult situations, I owe this not least to the counsel and comradely support of these men, who were all officers in the truest sense of the word.

The fate of the transfer had befallen not only me but also my friend, Captain Heiß.

The directive that the transfer must take place in the interest of the "cause" had been issued personally by the Reich Minister of Defense to the Chief of the Army Personnel Office with the words: "Either Heiß or me!" Heiß was summoned to Berlin to hear the reasons for his transfer.

In an excellent pamphlet titled "Notzeichen," he called for extreme resistance and struggle before his departure.

The following had become known due to a publication in the Parisian magazine "La vieille France": In a note dated September 10, 1922, the Reich government had informed the French government that a stubborn insistence on reparations demands—which, with the collapse of the mark, was simultaneously leading to rising costs of living in Germany—would add fuel to the fire of the Nationalists, perhaps helping them come to power and thereby endangering peace.

Any judgment on this note is probably superfluous.

In contrast, Heiß called upon the fourth estate, "the estate of the fighters, who for over four years have protected the homeland with their lives on every battlefield, for whom the fatherland has always meant everything and life nothing, who are not willing to be dragged into the abyss without a fight, the estate that does not fight with hollow promises of liberty, equality, fraternity, beauty, dignity, bread, and all such hollow phrases—but knows only discipline, loyalty, and obedience, and has but one goal: the thorough, relentless purge. This is the decisive battle between our Germanic worldview and the Marxist-Jewish International.

The German crisis has only one command: "Strike them dead!" Yes, back then it was still the uncomplicated "Father Heiss" who spoke thus.

In Munich, however, as the "Münchener Post" reported in disbelief, attacks by "swastika-bearers" on "workers" were piling up during this time.

When the dashing Reichswehr soldier Wilhelm Schwarzkopps had a run-in with some ruffians, during which he is said to have called one of them a "black-red-gold pig," the lady from Altheimereck threatened "self-help by the working class."

When that didn't work, she tried having alleged Americans and Italians march in, who were supposedly employed by the swastika-bearers, and urged the authorities "that the current system of lenient tolerance of such excesses is associated with the gravest damage to our reputation in the world," 10% 147 For me, the year 1923 began gloomily, like a veritable year of misfortune; if it brought my

separation from General von Epp as a New Year's gift, it seemed already in the first month that the whole horde of envious people and enemies, of incited and misguided attackers, had been unleashed upon me.

The attacks against me came from all sides; clashes, complaints, and matters of honor followed one another in an unbroken succession.

Some insults forced me to defend myself personally; in other cases, I appealed to the court of honor, which exposed the shameful slanderers.

An official investigation I requested regarding my person naturally revealed no hint of dishonorable or derelict conduct.

The slanderer was held accountable.

But it was all the more bitter to have to defend myself against such attacks at all.

These many personal attacks naturally hindered me, and thus achieved their purpose, often in a sensitive way.

In contrast, my field of work had taken on particular significance right at the beginning of the new year; it required the utmost exertion of all my strength.

January 1923 brought France and Belgium's raid into the Rhineland.

Alleged German failures in the delivery of livestock, timber, coal, and paving stones were used as a pretext.

The goal was to establish a foothold on the Rhine and the Ruhr and to crush Germany by advancing to the Main line.

The grave danger was recognized unanimously by the entire nation.

A sense of inner solidarity, a longing for unity and cohesion, similar to that of August 1914, filled the German lands.

At the same time, the resolve to defend and the will to fight gained strength and form.

A man at the head of the nation, inspired solely by a burning love of country and unwaveringly determined to survive and fight against all odds, could have rallied a united people behind him and led them to freedom.

Fate entrusted the Reich Chancellor with this task.

The Reich Chancellor sought and found his support in the socialist President of the Reich and—a second Bethmann Hollweg—in the parliamentary parties.

The socialist leaders seized the opportunity of the moment and placed themselves at the head of the National Resistance Movement in order to stifle it at the opportune moment.

On January 17, 1923, I viewed the situation as follows: “Two fronts are currently facing off in Germany.

On the front of the Valersand deniers stand the communists.

The other front is less clear and consists of...

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Wishes to hypocritically exploit the call for a National United Front for its own purposes.

It has realized that its followers will no longer allow themselves to be forced into the ranks of the traitors to the fatherland; it now wishes to withdraw from the ranks of the misled compatriots and confidently places itself at the head of the national movement.

As in 1914, under the protection of the truce and wearing a national mask, it will continue to inject its people-destroying ideas into the populace.

As is evident from the staging of the wedding day, particularly in Munich, the German bourgeoisie is once again falling hopelessly prey to the siren songs of Social Democracy.

This immense danger is recognized for the time being only by Hitler, who, it seems, will face the resistance of the patriotic associations in asserting this insight.

What will be the result of this united front?

In the event of an armed conflict with France, the most patriotic elements of the Reichswehr and the nationalist segment of the youth—who had previously rallied in the Freikorps—will be sent against the enemy and will surely perish.

The “reliable” elements will be deployed to safer areas in the East and will remain part of the German Republic.

Social democracy will, for the time being, most easily rid itself of the national elements sympathetic to it within its own country.

Against any elements that might still remain alive, the fury of the mob can then be unleashed—as it has been before.” I concluded my analysis with the view that an armed confrontation with France could only be considered after the internal question had been resolved.

The prerequisites for this—which I refrain from listing here out of due regard for the Republic Protection Act—concerned President Ebert, the policy of compliance, and the November criminals.

Only when guarantees for these demands were in place, and when a clear political goal had been established, could there, in my view, be any talk of a call by national leaders for a struggle for liberation against external forces.

In this regard, I was convinced that the organization of a liberation army would not have been possible in the heart of Germany, but only in the East.

On January 17, 1923, this was my assessment of the situation.

What had happened?

And what happened?

First, the “national united front” had formed in the Reichstag.

Following speeches by Loebe and Cuno, the Reichstag passed the following resolution on January 14, 1923—despite the vociferous opposition of the Communists and the objectively well-founded rejection by the nationalist von Graefe, who mercilessly exposed the half-measures: The Reichstag solemnly protests against the violation of law and treaty resulting from the violent occupation of the Ruhr region.

The Reichstag will support the government with all its might in the application of every measure necessary for the resolute defense against this act of violence.

A “day of mourning” was declared throughout the Reich for January 14, 1923.

Large rallies took place in Berlin; Munich also mourned and protested: officially in the Odeon in the morning, at the Feldherrnhalle at noon, and on Königsplatz in the afternoon.

Prime Minister Dr.

Von Knilling and State Parliament President Königbauer took up the mantle of speaking out against “French imperialism”; at Königsplatz, Professor Bauer, Dr.

Pittinger, and Father Rupert Mayr. “Only Hitler was missing.” But he did not wish to address this united front. “Nationalism and chauvinism, steeped in rhetoric, were on display everywhere and paraded for all to see!

A fashion show with a nationalist parade!” wrote the Communist “Neue Zeitung,” and the “Münchener Post” subsequently declared, full of national indignation, (i) a secret fraternization between “the swastika and the Soviet star.”

The consequences of the ill-conceived, kitschy, and inadequately executed mourning rally at Königsplatz resulted in a shift in power within the previously formally united national camp.

G The National Socialists marched out of the association of patriotic organizations.

The Zeller Group of the United Patriotic Associations of Munich broke away from Pittinger.

The Reds in Bavaria were relieved of a heavy burden.

They saw their reputation restored through their outward alliance with the decent people; the National Socialists, their bitter enemies, had been pushed into opposition.

This stance brought the National Socialists the greatest difficulties almost immediately.

A National Socialist Party Congress was scheduled for January 27

and 28 January 1923, the National Socialist Party Congress was scheduled to take place in Munich.

Rumors were circulated that Hitler would use this party congress as the occasion to launch the “Putsch” that had begun six months earlier.

Consequently, the state government decided to enact restrictive regulations for the party congress in order to prevent disturbances of the peace and public order.

Hitler, in turn, emphatically demanded for his movement the right to hold the party congress undisturbed and the authorization of open-air events and festivities.

Hitler’s representatives even threatened State Minister Dr.

Schweyer with using force to oppose the state’s orders.

Consequently, the Bavarian state government—comprising von Knilling, Gürtner, Schweyer, Matt, Krausneck, Oswald, Wutzlhofer, and von Meinel—declared a state of emergency in the right-bank region of Bavaria.

On January 26, 1923, the situation was such that for the 27th

And 28.

Clashes were to be expected between the National Socialists and the forces mobilized by the government—the police, the state police, the Reichswehr, and the self-defense units called up to reinforce the Reichswehr.

Hitler found himself in a difficult situation: he had staked his reputation on this; backing down would have cost him an unbearable loss of face, and all scheduled rallies fell under the ban.

But the Bavarian state government, too, had reached a dead end and could no longer turn back.

At this moment of extreme tension, a moment that could decide the entire fate of the matter, Hitler found a lifeline in the Reichswehr.

In view of the alarming situation, General von Lossow had summoned the unit commanders and officers stationed in Munich to a meeting.

At this meeting, many upright officers spoke out in support of Hitler.

In particular, it was General von Epp who raised his admonishing voice in favor of intervening in the dire situation.

I was feverish during that meeting and gave loud expression to my agitation over the Bavarian government's conduct.

This prompted another General Staff officer of Military District Command 150 to reproach me, saying he did not understand how I could remain a member of the Reichswehr with my views.

To the "uniformed soldier," as I called these people, any involvement in politics was an unheard-of transgression!

After a discussion I had with General von Epp immediately following the officers' meeting, along with a few like-minded individuals, he personally intervened again with General von Lossow.

Thereupon, the regional commander ordered me to fetch Hitler.

I brought him immediately.

During the discussion, which took place in the presence of the Chief of the State Police, Hitler gave his assurance that he would guarantee a peaceful conclusion to the party congress.

General von Lossow then instructed me to intercede with the government on his behalf for a relaxation of the stringent regulations.

I then drove with Hitler to the State Commissioner of Upper Bavaria, His Excellency von Kahr, who, following consultation, agreed to intercede on behalf of the National Socialist leader.

From there, I took Hitler to the State Commissioner for the City and Province of Munich, Police President Nork, who, after a long and earnest discussion, agreed to approve some of the National Socialist gatherings on his own initiative.

In return, Hitler pledged his full personal commitment and honor to ensure the smooth conduct of the party congress. A great success had been achieved, which filled me with joyful pride.

The intervention of the State Commander had prevented the armed forces and the self-defense units from being placed in the difficult position of having to oppose the N.

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The occurrence of events whose consequences could not have been fully foreseen was avoided at that time.

The occurrence of events whose significance could not have been overlooked was avoided at that time.

Hitler was spared a serious setback.

The party congress proceeded without any disturbance of public order.

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was able to proudly unfurl its banner.

It was foreseeable that the lifting of the ban on assembly activities at the party congress would trigger a storm of indignation on the part of the enemies of the N.

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In the Reichstag and the state parliament, the Marxists launched fierce attacks against the “weakness” of the Bavarian government.

The red and pink press raged.

The “Frankfurter Zeitung” directed its attacks primarily against General von Lossow, apparently based on reports from circles within the military district command itself.

However, as early as January 31,

that Police President Nortz would be sent into the wilderness for acting on his own initiative.

Meanwhile, the Bavarian Prime Minister had returned from negotiations in Berlin regarding the “consolidation” of the so-called “national,” i.e.

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parliamentary-Jewish united front, to Munich.

An agreement had been reached to exclude the “outsiders,” i.e.

i.e.

the nationalists, from the “united front”; in particular, Hitler’s activities were to be curtailed in Bavaria.

After Knilling’s return, a cabinet meeting took place at the police headquarters that very night, from 11 p.m. until 1 a.m., for which the ministers were roused from bed and members of the coalition parties as well as the Democrats were summoned.

At this cabinet meeting, the most severe measures against Hitler were adopted as policy.

Minister Dr.

Schwepyer issued a statement in which he sought to provide a “clarification” of the situation and, to reassure the Reds, initially instructed the State Commission to ban further gatherings of the N.

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The “Münchner Neueste Nachrichten” sided with Hitler at the time.

After sharply criticizing the Bapert state government for its disastrous missteps, particularly denouncing the imposition of a state of emergency as a grave foreign policy error, they wrote the following words regarding the Patriotic Movement: “Anyone with a sense of the future and the future of Germany is convinced that the future of Germany and Bavaria lies with nonpartisan organizations and not with the parties.

The political parties, as they exist today, are without exception remnants of imperial Germany.

Their leaders, their representatives, and their way of thinking belong to the past and are a thing of the past.

The new Germany will not be built by lobbyists; the new Germany will be built by nationalists and nothing but nationalists.” It may be good to recall these words once more. 8 588 In patriotic circles, the crisis did not pass without profound consequences.

For a long time, I had viewed Pittinger’s activities with great concern.

His stance against Hitler during the darkest days of the crisis led me to the decision to no longer follow him, albeit in a tactful manner.

I therefore asked General von Epp to arrange a discussion with Dr.

Pittinger.

This took place on the 27th

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In the evening in my office.

Present were Dr.

Pittinger and Dr.

Müller, Captain Heiß, and myself.

At the end of a lively two-hour discussion between myself and Dr.

Pittinger, I asked him to release me from the obligation to cooperate that I had previously undertaken toward him.

Since he refused, I submitted a written statement on January 30

a written statement that I consider my commitment to be dissolved.

Captain Heiß followed my lead.

In a memorandum that I gave to my closest political friends, I justified my action in response to the accusations that Pittinger subsequently leveled against me.

This memorandum later gave rise to a dispute over honor, which was not finally resolved until July 1923 by an arbitration ruling of General von Lossow.

Immediately after the discussion with Pittinger, Captain Heiß, after consulting with Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann, issued the following decisive statement: Statement.

The Reich Flag and the Lower Bavaria Organization stand by their ally Adolf Hitler in the struggle forced upon him.

They share Hitler’s conviction that, despite the dire external situation, the struggle against Marxism cannot be suspended even temporarily, and that settling accounts with the November criminals is the foremost national demand and the prerequisite for any action on the international stage.

They regret that the Patriotic Associations, through the manner in which they organized the day of mourning, have given the impression that they advocate for a united front—regardless of the cost to Hitler.

They demand that the Patriotic Associations change this position and expressly commit themselves to

the national front declared by Hitler against the international front. 2!

They regard the Piltinger–Zeller dispute as a personal matter between these men.

They do not wish to be drawn into this dispute with their associations.

To secure the necessary independence and freedom of thought and action in this regard, the associations will take the appropriate measures, insofar as this has not already been done.

Signed: Heiß.

On January 31, 1923, Captain Heiß appointed me a member of the working staff of the Reichsflagge state leadership and his authorized representative in Munich.

Our paths and Pitinger's parted ways for good.

The invasion of the French and Belgians also presented the Reichswehr with special challenges.

For better or worse, the Reich government had to come to terms with the idea that the "passive resistance" declared by the Reich could result in the Reichswehr transitioning to "active resistance."

Whether this idea was seriously considered, I cannot say.

In any case, nothing was done to vigorously suppress the activities of the internationally oriented press, which was paralyzing the will to defend the Reich.

That, however, would surely have been a prerequisite if one wished to foster a spirit of resistance among the people and the army.

Thus, the "Münchener Post" was also allowed to publish articles that were bound to severely damage military preparations.

I therefore felt compelled to submit the draft of the following letter to the Bavarian Minister-President to the State Commander (with copies to the Minister of State for Justice, the Chief of Police, and the Head of the State Police): Subject: Treason. In its issue No. 32 of February 8, 1923, the "Münchener Post" contains an article titled "Bavaria and the Reich! Against the 'Internal Enemy,'" in which the deployment of the Technical Emergency Aid, the State Police, and the Reichswehr, as well as the organization of the emergency police, etc.,

and particularly emphasizes the fact that there are sufficient resources in the state.

It is a well-known fact that the enemy derives its information mainly from the press of the left-wing parties.

It goes without saying that the discussion and establishment of the institutions and measures mentioned above will provide the French with the desired pretext to describe their repressive measures as justified and well-founded in light of the publications in the German press.

The enemy of the state, who is currently afflicting Germany most severely, receives direct support

through such publications—especially at this time.

I request—5 that immediate measures be taken to prevent support for the enemy from within our own ranks through actions and publications that, in their effect, constitute treason and high treason.” Today it is no longer a secret that the Reichswehr undertook certain preparations at that time to protect the threatened fatherland.

Of course, from the very beginning, I felt these preparations didn’t go far enough.

As a staff officer on the General Staff of the 7th

Bavarian

Dipifion, I had indeed been entrusted with a great deal of work, especially in my specific field; but what I longed for did not come to pass.

My goal would have been to call upon the entire people to take up arms against the hereditary enemy, to raise an army capable of defying the arrogance of the victorious foe who had gone mad.

The objective of the Army High Command was limited to initiating certain preparations, within the framework of the political directives issued by the Reich leadership, to repel an advance by the French and Belgians into the heart of Germany.

I set forth what moved me at that time in a memorandum titled “Thoughts on the Preparation and Implementation of Mobilization” dated March 8, 1923, which I presented to the Regional Commander, Lieutenant General von Lossow, as my personal statement for his personal information.

During the brief period in which he was directly under my command, I had come to have complete confidence in him.

He was a highly capable, decisive officer who did not immediately close his ears to lines of thought that deviated from conventional thinking and was also able to listen to opinions that contradicted his own.

These are—to reassure anxious minds and the Entente—personal reflections that have not been given or assumed any official character.

I wish to preface this with just one thing: Germany today enjoys the blessings of the joyful League of Nations.

The father of this creation, Mr. Wilson, succumbed to madness shortly after this act of creation.

But the motto at the entrance to this strange association should, in my opinion, be: “si vis bellum para pacem!” “If you want war, prepare for peace!” Peace and reconciliation among nations are loudly proclaimed there with great fanfare and constantly prepared, so that war can be prepared at home all the more undisturbed.

An honest people, on the other hand, would do better to hold fast to the old saying: “sivis pacem, para bellum!” Preparation for war is a serious, patriotic duty.

This is especially true for those who risk their lives; they have a sacred right to ensure that this duty is not neglected. 154 This has absolutely nothing to do with “warmongering” or “inciting war.”

The greatest war-cries have always come from those who are heroes only in the rear and warriors only at home; the front-line soldier, who knows no “death without a rifle,” remains silent and acts.

But the concepts of “war” and “peace” can only be judged by those who know war.

From the aforementioned memorandum, I draw the following thoughts: “First, I will attempt to clarify what the Supreme Commander must demand as a military necessity and what is achievable given the situation in which we find ourselves.

I would like to preface this with a few points that, in my view, are of fundamental importance.

The German people have a long war behind them, with all its great deeds and hardships.

The front-line soldier, who has learned to scorn death, is no longer the soldier of 1914.

Too much has happened since then.

The entire nation has grown up with the great deeds of the army; an entire nation has also witnessed the tragic collapse of the army.

And so the soldier of 1923 no longer allows himself to be guided by rank, age, or the desire for a grave; he allows himself to be guided only by personality.

One may regret this from the soldier’s traditional point of view, but one will have to take it into account.

Moreover, the mutiny of November 1918 shattered authority.

The authority of the king, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, which commanded respect behind all orders issued by the rulers and state authorities and was obeyed unreservedly for its own sake, no longer exists.

The governments and authorities that today claim authority for themselves merely as such are unable to assert themselves.

The governments of the Reich and the states can only succeed in gaining recognition to the extent that they purge themselves internally.

As long as the states are not led by strong leaders who serve as powerful representatives of the will of the state, a consolidation of state authority is unthinkable.

The disorganized army, too, will have to reestablish the authority that the Royal Army relinquished in November 1918 by selecting suitable leaders.

But we are still living in the midst of the revolution today.

The revolution is by no means over, and the army in particular will be called upon to play a leading role in the German Revolution.

Such is the state of affairs today, as the Imperial Army faces the task of preparing for war mobilization.

It is obvious that this mobilization cannot be the same as the mobilization of 1914.

As mentioned above, the conditions have changed too much for that.

Anyone who takes the position today that this mobilization can be regulated and ordered from behind a desk, that one need only give orders, that the introduction of universal conscription is the solution to all problems—in short, that reason can master this question—should withdraw his hand from this delicate work.

He will shatter everything and cause damage that can never be undone.

Today's mobilization must be prepared with due consideration for all the imponderables of the current circumstances; any disruption of existing structures must be scrupulously avoided.

What must be achieved?

An army, organized as a framework under the Imperial Army, divided into divisions, with the individual units formed and supplied according to the requirements of war. 155 156 The strength and organization of the deployment are ordered solely by the provincial commander.

In the event of a mobilization, the provincial commander is the supreme military leader; martial law applies, and any special arrangements

The assembly and organization of the formations must take place as quickly and smoothly as possible; the supply and equipment must be provided in a condition suitable for combat.

The assembly and deployment of formations must take place as quickly and smoothly as possible; supplies and equipment must be provided in a condition suitable for combat.

What can and must be conceded without jeopardizing the ultimate goal?

I personally do not consider the immediate proclamation of universal conscription and mobilization based on universal conscription to be a desirable measure.

Of course, in the face of the impending military conflict, it is a matter of self-preservation to actually and fully implement universal conscription—more thoroughly than during the previous war years of 1914–1918.

The soldier will demand that everyone be conscripted into the army, whether as a soldier or as a laborer.

He will not tolerate that, while he sacrifices everything for the fatherland, idlers, war profiteers, and traitors undermine the victory behind his back.

The annual draft classes will be called to arms without regard to rank or profession.

There are two classes of pay: one for the front, and one—significantly lower—for the home front.

The state provides for the family equally.

However, in my opinion, this general full conscription can only come about once a strong volunteer army exists that is capable of enforcing the full implementation of compulsory military service.

The necessity of quickly building a stronger army also leads to the conclusion that we must be content with volunteers for the initial mobilization.

The task, therefore, is

to form the mobile units of the Imperial Army and volunteers that are initially deemed necessary.

To this end, it can only be advantageous if entire, cohesive volunteer units can be incorporated into the army.

At the moment of incorporation into the New Army, however, military compulsion replaces voluntarism for the volunteer units as well as for all volunteers.

One must only avoid the situation where, for example, student units, officer companies—in short, formations that contain a great deal of leadership potential—are incorporated as a whole.

On the question of leadership, too, the associations will generally be accepted.

If a man has proven himself in the field, he should be allowed to keep his unit, even if his rank would not normally qualify him as a leader.

This will all balance itself out later.

On the other hand, however, we must fight with the utmost vigor against the practice of considering only rank when selecting leaders; this view is untenable in today’s world.

A man who has failed in the field or during a revolution must never again be appointed as a leader.

In all revolutionary periods, young leaders have also performed outstandingly in positions for which they were not yet qualified in terms of age and rank.

It would do no harm if some senior officers of the army were to take this fact into account as well, so that they are not too taken aback by the harsh reality of the situation in an emergency.

On the question of insignia as well, it is worthwhile to accommodate the associations. None of these concessions will impair the full combat readiness of the units.

Lions, but they will promote the spirit of camaraderie and solidarity and are well-suited to expressing gratitude to the units for their patriotic service.

For we must not forget that the men who have united for years in the valiant combat units and, despite danger, hatred, and persecution, have stood loyal to their leaders and remained faithful to their flag—that these men alone have laid the very foundation upon which a spiritual, personnel, and material mobilization can be built today.

One truly cannot help but feel a sense of bitterness when looking today at the offices of some Reich Army commanders, seeing that these officers have learned nothing and forgotten nothing.

These commanders and staff officers, who, focusing their attention solely on the narrow confines of their own areas of responsibility, have consciously distanced themselves from the struggle for the soul of the people and from the revival of the patriotic spirit, now believe that, by virtue of their official authority, they can take over the legacy of the units.

They prattle on about the spirit of the Freikorps, about gang leaders and mercenary rule, and believe they alone hold the patent solution for reorganizing the army.

These are the very same men who, because they knew only the material aspects, the numbers, and never understood the human being in the soldier, committed grave sins against the spirit of the army during the war; who were the main culprits in allowing the revolution to take root in the army at all; over whom the revolution also swept, without their recognizing their role or complicity; and who today believe their time has come again to carry on with their madness where they left off in November 1918.

If we fail to keep these “uniformed soldiers”—to whom the psychology of combat and the combatant is alien and will always remain so—away from positions of importance and authority, the damage will be immense.

In the Royal Army, with its forty years of outstanding peacetime training and its brilliant constitution, such men were able to operate for certain periods without noticeable harm; the New Army cannot afford them.

The leaders of the units have a right to be accommodated to the fullest extent possible, as far as military requirements permit.

Thus, only one principle can be recommended: respect for the legitimate wishes of the units, recognition and appreciation of their leaders, and far-reaching accommodation regarding personnel matters in the event of mobilization.

In my opinion, the tradition of the regiments can be replaced by only one thing: the tradition of the Old Royal Army.

I cannot imagine anything that could strengthen the appeal of enlisting in the army more than the reestablishment of the old, glorious regiments, and I would consider it a grave oversight to forego this advantage, which presents itself so readily, without having anything better to offer in its place.

The soldier—and only he is the first to go to the front—will prefer to serve in the infantry regiment he has come to love rather than, for example, in Infantry Regiment 165, and will go into battle with that unit.

Anyone who would deny this would only prove once again that he is unfamiliar with the intangible aspects of the army and will never understand them.

There can be no doubt that this is now the last opportunity to restore the Old Army.

These proposals could easily be expanded upon.

However, the present remarks are not intended to constitute a comprehensive program; they are merely meant to convey a few thoughts that may, after all, be worthy of consideration.

The new phase of the war that is now approaching—the war that began in 1912 and continues to this day—in which we could once again actively enter the arena of battle, would decide the fate of our people.

It may become the most terrible and difficult.

The people will look to their leaders and expect them to lead the country to victory and an honorable peace.

In the terrible situation in which we find ourselves, which has perhaps no parallel in world history, the task will be the most difficult ever set before an army and its commanders.

May our leaders prove themselves equal to their grave task and raise Germany from its deepest fall to victory and honor once more." 157 After reading this memorandum, the reader surely needs no further explicit assurance that it did not correspond to official views.

Of course, there could be no question of a "mobilization" or a "fight against France"; only "moderate, prudent resistance" could be considered.

At the same time, it was obvious—and was gradually recognized by all patriotic circles—that passive resistance, if not soon replaced by active struggle, would sooner or later come to an end.

We admired the heroic deeds of individual brave men, such as Schlegel and our friends, who staked their lives and freedom on the barricades, but we were well aware that all sacrifices would be in vain unless the German government resolved to fight to the death.

A military confrontation with France would not have been entirely hopeless at that time.

Perhaps it would have been our only salvation.

Of course, a firm decision had to be made: the entire German people had to fight for freedom and life.

One must not shy away from voluntarily and without a fight temporarily ceding large parts of German territory to the enemy.

When Reich Chancellor Cuno was visiting Munich, he naturally also had a lengthy conversation with General von Lossow.

During this time, Cuno's aide had a heated discussion in my office with Adolf Hitler, whom I had

summoned, and with me.

Hitler expounded his political viewpoint, while I outlined our thoughts on the situation from a military perspective in brief statements.

Even if the conversation led to nothing further, it did at least provide an opportunity to present our views with complete clarity and ruthless frankness to an influential man in the immediate circle of the highest Reich official, 22.

The Working Group of Patriotic Combat Associations.

To get straight to the point: As the father of this child, I must confess that Captain Heiß's Reich flag and Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann's Lower Bavaria organization had broken away from Medical Officer Dr.

Pittinger and had clearly and unequivocally sided with Adolf Hitler.

The task now was to unite these associations into a closer alliance and, by incorporating further groups, to forge a powerful circle of combat-ready federations.

As deputy and authorized leader of the strongest and most united organization, the Reichsflagge, my role could no longer be limited to supporting the organizations with advice and action; I now had a decisive say myself and was also willing to forcefully assert my ideas, which at that time were almost always in line with those of Captain Heiß.

There was likewise complete unanimity with Hitler and Hofmann regarding the immediate tasks and goals.

The V.

V. (Patriotic Associations) of Munich, under the energetic leadership of Grand Marshal Zeller, were the first organization with which a closer relationship was established.

The Patriotic Associations were actually a successor organization to the Munich Citizens' Militia.

They were still organized by districts, which, depending on the personality of the district leader, were more or less active.

Alongside energetic, responsible, and youthful leaders, such as the court photographer Franz Grainer, there were unfortunately also numerous rather "prudent" gentlemen in leadership positions.

Zeller did indeed attempt, with commendable energy and undeniable success, to transform the "association" into a powerful organization; he had a determined ally in his chief of staff, Major Keller, in particular; but a series of "dignified" subordinate leaders, based on rank and age, proved to be a real obstacle.

Added to this was the fact that many of these individuals maintained close ties, whether to Medical Director Pittinger or to the ruling People's Party.

Their influence was not so easy to neutralize.

Even more detrimental were ties stemming from the fact that a not insignificant portion of the members of the V.

V., specifically the junior officers, belonged to the civil service, and in particular to the police.

It is obvious that the ruling Bavarian People's Party had no difficulty in asserting its influence in this way; many of the difficulties that had to be overcome within the association become understandable only when this fact is taken into account.

Nevertheless, Zeller was able, despite all obstacles, to prevail on the main issues; this remains his undisputed achievement.

After the merger of the Patriotic Associations of Munich, I entered into negotiations with the two separate leagues, Oberland and Blücher, which had previously been united.

I had actually always viewed the Oberland League with a certain degree of reservation.

The membership of the association was, for the most part, very good—exactly what one would hope for in a fighting organization: young men and men from all walks of life, healthy in body and mind, battle-hardened, and full of the will to live; the academic shoulder to shoulder with the manual laborer.

But the leadership, which at that time was practically still in the hands of the commander Römer, was taking a course that did not please me.

As Pittinger's representative, I had previously advocated bringing about a merger between the Oberland League and the "Bavaria and Reich" League; I did not have fond memories of the negotiations from that time.

My dissatisfaction with the leadership had likely also stemmed from the split that had arisen within the League entirely without outside intervention.

Dr.

Ruge, the lecturer driven out of Heidelberg University by the Jews, arguably one of Germany's most combative figures, brought the leaders of the Blücher League—architect Schäfer, railway inspector Knauf, and a few other gentlemen—to me at that time to bring about the Blücher League's affiliation with the Working Group.

For the two leagues, the Oberland and the Blücher League, which were fighting for supremacy and the following previously united in the Oberland League, the question of affiliation was a matter of life and death.

The Oberland emerged victorious from the struggle between the two associations, having gained the recognition of our district.

After quite protracted and difficult negotiations, which I conducted alternately with both parties with the knowledge and approval of both groups, I decided in favor of Oberland, which had broken away

from the leadership of the Römer brothers, and against the Blücherbund.

In the person of architect Schäfer, I could not find the assurance of a trusting collaboration.

My plan to reunite the separated leagues following the resignation of the current leaderships and the election of a new, untainted leadership failed due to Schäfer's resistance.

Likewise, my good friend Lieutenant Commander Kautter, the military representative of the Consul Organization (O.

C.), who had already concluded special agreements with the Blücher League, made it impossible for me to establish a connection with this valuable organization.

Instead of the Blücher League and the Consul Organization, the Oberland now joined the working group.

In the first days of February, the following announcement was made: "In view of the absolute necessity of uniting the national power groups in Bavaria into a cohesive movement, the three Upper Bavarian associations are establishing a working group on the following

On the basis of: 1.

To safeguard common national interests externally and, in particular, vis-à-vis Berlin.

A committee will be formed to which each association will delegate a representative.

Decisions of the committee shall be made by majority vote.

This committee is exclusively authorized to represent the common interests vis-à-vis the state government.

It shall designate the representatives who, if necessary, are to negotiate with the state government.

Special negotiations by individual associations with the state government regarding the affiliation of additional associations shall be conducted jointly by the undersigned associations, which hereby authorize the committee for this purpose.

N.

S.

D.

A P.

Imperial Flag V.

V.

Munich, signed: Adolf Hitler.

Signed: Hei.

Signed: Zeller.

Upper Bavaria Combat Unit of Lower Bavaria Signed: J.

V.

Mulzer.

Signed: Hofmann.

As early as February 5,

February, the working group addressed a letter to Minister-President Dr.

Von Knilling, in which it informed the state government of the merger and issued the following statement: “We continue to stand behind a state government that is and remains resolutely national.” 100 e ee national parties are excluded. 2.

The concept of a “national” government requires a fundamental definition at this point.

A state government can only claim the designation “national” if it serves national interests alone and without compromise.

A government that is “objective,” that grants the same rights to internationalists as to nationalists, that protects the Soviet star just as much as the black-white-red flag, may, as far as I’m concerned, call itself “bourgeois,” but not national.

Avoiding all inconveniences, constantly making compromises, speaking one way to the left-wing parties and another to the right-wing parties, substituting petty tricks and political antics for action, taking two steps forward and three steps back, always preparing and never acting—this may be the pride of ministerial councils, but it is not proof of a government’s “nationalism.”

The Bavarian state government, which likely calls itself “national” for all time simply because it was installed by nationalists, came increasingly under the influence of the Bavarian People’s Party.

This alone explains why the militant groups were bound to come into conflict with this government to the same extent.

Not to stir up trouble or to oppose at any cost, but to enforce the primacy of national interests over party considerations!

The limit and goal of a state dependent on parties and led by party functionaries will always be the police state, never the military state.

The police state is kept in check by government officials, police officers, and bailiffs; the fighter can do

without it.

The police state is brave inwardly and cowardly outwardly; the military state directs its combined strength against the external enemy.

In early February, we approached the battle-hardened editor of “Heimatland,” Captain Weiß, with the suggestion that he place his newspaper at the disposal of the Working Group.

Captain Weiß did not refuse our request.

We recognized in him arguably the strongest literary force and talent in the struggle to assert the Nationalist Idea, a man who selflessly, fearlessly, and resolutely placed all his abilities at the service of the movement and did not shrink from any sacrifice, not even that of his freedom.

The working committee of this working group always met for regular sessions in one of my offices.

The Minister a.

D.

Roth, to whose energy, diligence, and vast knowledge and skill the associations owe a great deal.

After much persuasion and pleading, I managed to secure Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel’s agreement to assume military leadership of the working group.

Thus, the man the working group needed took the helm.

It goes without saying that, through his exceptional abilities and rare strength of will, he enhanced the military significance of the organizations to the greatest possible extent.

In addition to Captain Weiß, Attorney Hemmeter—a member of the Consul organization—had been recruited by Minister Roth to serve as secretary.

As a representative of Hitler, who was unable to attend, his new s.

A. Commander, who had taken over the leadership from Klintzsch, took part in the meetings.

The fresh, carefree daring of this proven German flying officer—he had most recently been commander of Richthofen’s fighter wing during the war—always enlivened the already battle-hardened atmosphere in our circle.

In the s.

A.

, he brought a breath of fresh air, even if he perhaps boosted their self-confidence a little too much.

He soon grew quite fond of the spirited officer and spent many happy hours with him in his cozy home, which he had set up far outside Nymphenburg with his refined, Swedish-born young wife.

His chief of staff, Lieutenant Commander Hossmann, was a clear-headed man who viewed the situation soberly and possessed an extraordinary capacity for work.

I would have wished that this tall and tactful officer had exerted a stronger influence on the development of the S.

A.

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The Munich regiment was led by First Lieutenant Brückner, a personality brimming with vitality, a fresh-faced, honest, and carefree go-getter.

In the Oberland, Dr.

Weber’s leadership.

The working group had a reliable, honest comrade-in-arms in this man, who was averse to deviations and special ambitions, as were characteristic of the Oberland’s former leadership.

His military leader, Captain Mulzer, was a reliable pillar of support for the leader and the League.

The Patriotic Associations of Munich grew in strength and fighting spirit over time.

Zeller, who defiantly stood up to the accusations directed against him from within Pittinger’s ranks, made great sacrifices for our association and the movement itself.

His friend, Privy Councilor Zentz, who never shied away from national affairs, viewed our cause with goodwill and often supported it.

National Munich owes him a debt of gratitude.

Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel and Captain Christenn worked diligently and successfully to ensure the military training of Zeller’s units.

Captain Heiß, flying the imperial flag, undoubtedly commanded the most cohesive and capable unit in the working group.

Through tireless activity, relentless campaigning, and lectures that took him to nearly every corner of Franconia, he had carved out a dominant position for himself throughout Northern Bavaria, particularly in Nuremberg.

Among his closest collaborators, whom he effectively enlisted, Dechant, Kron eis, and Liebel deserve special mention.

Captain Heiß’s patriotic work found effective support in the Nuremberg Police Department in Police Director Gareis and his loyal assistant Schachinger during many difficult times.

In their manly manner and disposition, their energetic and purposeful leadership in difficult situations —often in conflict with the municipal authorities of the democratic Mayor Luppe, mostly without support from their official superiors—this pair of Dioscuri was hardly inferior to their colleagues in Munich, Pöhner and Frick.

The Lower Bavaria organization, including Eichstätt and Ingolstadt—or, as it was later called, “Unterland”—was led with a firm hand by First Lieutenant Hofmann.

But he overcame the many constraints imposed by his position as commander of the Reichswehr with a sense of responsibility and skill.

In Major a.

D.

Baron Lössel Holz von Colberg and First Lieutenant Willmer, he had men at his side who put his orders and suggestions into practice with understanding.

The Temporary Volunteer Corps, which comprised primarily student associations—including the remnants of the Temporary Volunteer Battalions from the years 1919 to 1921—was led by Colonel von Lenz.

In particular, the military training of the units under his command was well organized.

Colonel von Lenz was close to the working group from the very beginning, but did not decide to formally join until mid-April.

The “Heimatland” developed into a highly regarded campaign newspaper; however, our efforts were also recognized and promoted in the “Münchner Neueste Nachrichten” and, at times, in the “Münchner Zeitung.”

From the very beginning, I strove to make the union of the associations as close and strong as possible in order to thereby increase our military and political clout.

I intended to achieve this gradually through the military leaders.

At first, of course, the leaders of the associations, who were anxious to prevent any surrender of their autonomy, were still very much opposed to this plan.

Alongside this Federation of Combat Associations, to which I later also managed to win over “Bavaria and the Reich,” I envisioned a collaboration with a Federation of Patriotic Associations (officers’ and enlisted men’s associations, as well as economic and other associations grounded in national principles), perhaps under the leadership of Professor Bauer.

These two major groups—the group of militant associations (under Kriebel and Hitler) and the group of patriotic associations (under Bauer)—were to be united under an honorary chairman of the patriotic associations and societies.

The task of providing the federations with funds would have fallen to a financial committee standing

above the associations.

The honorary chairman of these associations was not to have any influence on the specific policies of the groups.

I was well aware that, given the diversity of the associations, a strict unification was unattainable; nevertheless, I hoped that such an organization would help balance out mutual resistance and give the entire national movement greater scope for action. 11% 163 This goal, which I strove for, remained beyond my reach.

However, at least within the working group, enough practical work was accomplished that it gained recognition over time.

To effectively counter the hostility of political opponents and envious individuals, I submitted a detailed memorandum to the State Commander on February 1, 1923, which comprehensively addressed the smear campaigns against me.

I did not hesitate to confide my latest thoughts and plans to General von Lossow, to whom I was absolutely devoted.

I also trusted his chief of staff, Lieutenant Colonel von Berchem, even though I had repeatedly been at odds with him and our views often diverged widely.

I knew that every possible form of slander against me had been leveled at him in particular, but I was under no illusion that he rejected these calumnies.

He had no time for underhanded tactics.

In my memorandum I declared: “My stance is radically nationalist; I reject any policy of accommodation, understanding, or compromise, and demand the fiercest struggle by all means against the internal and external enemy.

I am convinced that only this clear, ruthless front will lead to the goal, and I am prepared to sacrifice everything—life and career—for my conviction.

I am—yes, I am—determined to play a decisive role in this struggle.

But I also solemnly declare that my ambition will have reached its end the moment this goal is achieved and our fatherland is free and strong once more.

And I ask just as solemnly: if I still belong to the Imperial Army then, I wish to be stationed as a company commander in some province

To be stationed in a garrison where I can serve the most beautiful and dearest of duties. 8 85 for me, to be a company commander and thus an educator of young Germans.

I further stated: “I am also a political soldier and am so by conviction.

I am of the opinion that if we had had political officers in November 1918, the revolution would not

have taken place.

Before and during the revolution, I fell gravely ill with the flu in the field and was in the military hospital.

Despite this, this disgrace burns in my soul; I feel myself to be partly to blame for it and must make amends for this personal shame.

I have always kept my oath to my king and remain bound to him to this day. That we officers are to blame for the success of the revolution is a fact for me; we must be the first to atone for this guilt.

But I cannot do that if I am a mere foot soldier, passively awaiting only what I am ordered to do.

I have always believed that the willingness to take responsibility is the leader's foremost duty.

The courage to tell a superior that he is wrong and to stake one's life on what one recognizes as right is a soldier's duty.

I have, however, always possessed this courage and have therefore often made myself unpopular.

In my opinion, however, the General Staff officer in particular must possess this courage of responsibility, even at the cost of his position and his career." From Section II, which dealt with the political situation in the Reich, I quote the following sentences: "Cuno stands alone in Berlin within the Reich government.

He is supported by the industrialists who back his policies. 164 The Reich government as a whole, which was already negotiating with the French even before the occupation of Essen, is currently negotiating again.

Under pressure from the trade unions, it intends to resume the policy of compliance; the abandonment of resistance in the Ruhr region is already being considered.

There is no such thing as a united front in Berlin; the demands of the Marxists and trade unionists are becoming increasingly intolerable and brazen.

In the Ruhr region, the so-called united front is still holding on by a thread, as workers tell themselves that their pay is currently safest when received from German employers.

The leaders of the far left, however, are already brazenly negotiating with the French and are received with open arms by the French commanders at any time." But I wrote about the development of events in Bavaria in Section II and

A.: "The patriotic front in 8 has recently received its most essential direction and reinforcement from the leader of the National Socialists, Adolf Hitler.

I am convinced that the struggle we must wage for our national existence can only succeed if we have made the workers national again.

Since I am convinced that no bourgeois party or national movement is capable of this, the

strengthening of the National Socialist movement appears to me to be an essential prerequisite and source of strength for the patriotic battlefront.

X Since the summer of 1919, a number of men have made a name for themselves in this front by attempting to unite the forces gathered in the self-defense associations under their leadership.

Dr. Pittinger, a medical officer, took Escherich's place.

Pittinger.

He took on the difficult and perilous task of uniting the nation for the struggle.

In my opinion, his task must have been: a) to unite the self-defense associations under his leadership, b) to give the Patriotic Front such strength that the government and the people would have to reckon with this power factor—in short, to shape a national policy: c) to make all the political, military, and economic preparations necessary for the initiation and conduct of the struggle against internal and external enemies.

If one now takes a sober and objective look back at the activities of the National Council under Dr.

Pittinger, it must be noted that he did not achieve any of these goals or bring them any closer to realization.

He did not succeed in uniting the self-defense associations in Bavaria.

There is no connection with North German and other South German associations.

In Austria, two camps stand opposed to one another.

I am not investigating who is to blame in each individual case; it is, however, a fact that he has not succeeded in uniting them, and it is my firm conviction that he will not succeed. 7 0 No success can be reported in the enforcement of national 1.

The Republic Protection Laws, with all the trimmings, are in force in Bavaria, and nationalists are still being prosecuted in Munich by the State Court.

Thorough and systematic preparations in political, military, and economic matters have not been made.

The political preparations have not even progressed to the point where there is a reasonably useful intelligence network in the countries relevant to us.

The military preparations, in my opinion, are a self-deception.

On paper, numbers are strung together, but in reality, they are matched by nothing or nothing of any use.

I also dispute that the economic preparations have been carried out in a sufficient manner.

They are based on mere assumptions and estimates derived from a few discussions.

All in all, a failure. The memorandum concluded with the following sentences: “I am of the opinion that we must not repeat the mistake made thus far: first appointing a leader and then seeking out the KB units, but rather the units must be assembled beforehand.

The Er om. 87 must then already be established.

In doing so, must we finally ensure that personal ambition is set aside and that only one goal serves as the guiding star?

“The salvation of the fatherland.” In a subsequent discussion, General von Lossow gave me the opportunity to elaborate further on my remarks. 145 In this context, I was also able to emphasize the necessity of close contact between the Reichswehr and patriotic youth organizations in response to the intention to prohibit members of the Reichswehr from joining patriotic associations.

At that time, I succeeded in convincing General von Lossow of this necessity.

Incidentally, the Reichswehr Minister’s decree issued in this regard was not initially enforced in the Bavarian part of the Reichswehr.

It was not until a personal order in April 1923, to which I shall return, that Dr.

Geßler ordered the V.

B.

B.

Bavaria and the Reich flag as political associations and to prohibit Reichswehr soldiers from joining them.

His Majesty the King was well-disposed toward me at that time; I had the opportunity to appear from time to time to give a short lecture and was also allowed to speak a few words of my own.

In addition to His Excellency von Kahr and Dr.

Pittinger, General von Epp, President Pöhner, and Captain Heiß emerged as advisors to King Rupprecht at that time.

The mediator was Count von Soden, who was initially a political advisor to Dr.

Pittinger and then, as Chief of the Cabinet, became King Rupprecht’s closest aide.

Unfortunately, his political achievement consists in the fact that he temporarily alienated all the combative figures from the king.

His honorable character remains beyond question.

At times, my military duties also brought me into contact with the police department.

However, since the appointment of Government Councilor Dr.

Bernreuther to Frick's post as head of Department VIa, these relations remained strictly limited to official matters.

Of other authorities, I had closer contact only with State Councilor Baron von Freyberg of the Ministry of the Interior. 5 We "Nationalists" were mostly at odds with Interior Minister Schweper.

He was actually the driving force in the fight against the Völkische associations; in the nature of our opposition, however, he was more of a support to me than his successor, who was all too much of an enforcement arm of the "V.

P.

P.

For to describe the National Socialists as a secret society seems to me somewhat far-fetched.

One really couldn't have appeared like the National Socialists in 1923!

In contrast, in his work he often combined a certain bluntness with natural common sense and was also able to listen to others' views, even those that differed from his party's.

His closest colleague, Ministerialrat Zetlmair, lacked this latter quality.

Through my connection with Freyberg, I was nevertheless able to clear up some misunderstandings.

Dr.

Schweyer in the Bavarian government was Prime Minister Dr.

Von Knilling.

Whether it was right and wise to throw down the gauntlet to him so often, I leave open.

The proposal, advocated above all by Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel and myself, that we should opt for Knilling instead of Kahr, even met with such significant response at a certain point that the working group sought contact to determine whether Knilling would be inclined to accept the honorary presidency of the combat associations.

Although there was no definitive rejection, the view of those who regarded Kahr as the state

President and supreme patriotic leader.

One day, Government Master Builder Schaefer of the Blücher League and his companion, Lieutenant Commander Kautter of the Wiling League (O.

C.).

They sought to win me over to a plan to use available French funds to prepare and carry out a national uprising in Bavaria and a struggle against the imperial government.

I said neither yes nor no, but immediately called Freyberg, whom I asked to come to me without delay.

In his presence, the two men presented their plan once more in a somewhat toned-down form.

I thanked them for their report, without, however, taking a personal position on the matter at the end.

They probably concluded from this that I had refused.

Now the following occurred—I leave the conclusion to the reader: Schaefer, Kautter, and, as the third in the group, the then-Nationalist and current “comrade” Major Ma, filed a report with the police—immediately following the conversation in my office—regarding a plot against the Reich.

F It has been proven, and Schaefer has not denied it at all, that he received and spent substantial sums of money from French politicians (Colonel Richert).

On February 20,

A meeting took place in which, in addition to Schaefer, Kautter, and Mayr, or

their representatives, the French Colonel Richert. 167 First Lieutenant Berger, a member of the Blücher League’s executive committee who had opposed League leader Schaefer and disapproved of his business conduct, was held in pretrial detention for 7 weeks.

The high treason trial was brought against Machhaus and Professor Fuchs.

Both had participated in the discussions and preparations.

Professor Fuchs had approached a number of authorities and high-ranking figures and developed his plans.

While Machhaus took his own life in prison, Fuchs was still languishing in prison in the summer of 1927.

His patrons no longer recognized him during and after the trial.

But Schaefer and his comrades were the prosecutors and witnesses!

Was it a coincidence that, at that time, the Blücher and Wiking Leagues—represented by Schaefer and Kautter—were gathering equipment in Schleißheim near Munich at great expense?

Trucks upon trucks brought in materials from all over the country, naturally for cleaning and repair. “By mistake,” warehouses belonging to other organizations were also cleared out and brought to Schleißheim, where at the “Bergl” Mr. Negierungsbaumeister Schaefer had set up his command post. I observed the transport movements very closely, occasionally supported the sub-leaders by providing transport crews and vehicles, and even made rooms available, but then deemed it advisable to place all

the equipment that had been made available under the guard of the Reichswehr.

This measure did not meet with unqualified approval from Schaefer and his comrades. 13 In doing so, I prevented events that I could only foresee and fear. “Comrade” Mayr, speaking for himself, Kautter, and Schaefer, may possibly be held against me that the visit to my home served only the purpose of sounding me out.

This is contradicted by the fact that serious preparations had been made, and that it was not customary among officers, even after the November revolt, to spy on one another.

On February 26, 1923, an opportunity arose to address a larger group of representatives of the Patriotic Associations of Northern Germany (v.

Watter, v.

Oven, Roßbach, etc.) in Berlin.

The purpose of the meeting was to establish an umbrella organization modeled on the Baden system and to explore a possible merger across all of Germany.

General Ludendorff spoke there in favor of the merger and called for support for General von Seeckt and Reich Chancellor Cuno.

Heiß attended the meeting on behalf of the Working Group.

No results were achieved.

The Seeckt-Severing Agreement, which undoubtedly represented a misguided and inappropriate concession by the Reichswehr commander toward a system with which an honest agreement is simply impossible, fostered a particularly ominous distrust of the Chief of the Army High Command in certain patriotic circles at that very time.

Thus General Ludendorff stood alone with his demand; in particular, First Lieutenant Mahraun wanted to form an independent army and would hear nothing of cooperation with Seeckt, as a participant in the meeting reported from Berlin with great indignation.

In Munich, February, March, and to some extent April were filled with negotiations between the Reichswehr and the self-defense associations. The issue at hand was a declaration of commitment that the leaders of the associations were to submit to the state commander, pledging to place themselves under his command if necessary.

The negotiations were unpleasant on both sides.

The military district command attempted to operate according to the principle of “divide and conquer” and addressed the individual subordinate leaders; the working group of the combat units, on the other hand, declared its willingness to commit only as a whole.

But here, too, certain mistakes were made that would have been better avoided.

The “Bavaria and Reich” Federation attempted to insert itself as a umbrella organization and seize leadership once again.

The haggling over such a serious matter was not pleasant in itself.

However, it became even more unpleasant when the political parties also interfered.

The Bavarian People’s Party did not welcome the activities of the Working Group in any way; least of all did it appreciate Hitler’s successes.

In its fear of Hitler and its dread of the strengthening of the Nationalist struggle movement, it decided to establish an emergency police force.

The bitter father of this monstrosity was likely Senior Government Councilor Schässer, who hated all German nationalists like hell and was undoubtedly our most determined adversary.

An explicit commitment not to act against the government and to obey the government’s orders in all cases—primarily, this likely referred to the National Socialists—was to be required.

Only these good people who signed this were to be considered “loyal to the state” in the future.

The B.

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P.

separated the black sheep from the white.

A high-ranking Bavarian general (von Stetten) was considered for the position of deputy Bavarian state commander.

Within the working group, the B.

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P.

to foster reconciliation.

On April 11, 1923, the Bavarian Herald Schässer urged the representative of “Unterland”—naturally with a patriotic reference to the Czech threat at the border—to return to Pittinger’s fold and break away from the National Socialists.

Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann had just been transferred from his post in Passau as fortress commander to Ingolstadt.

Major Adam, who had relieved him in Passau, was a good friend of Pittinger’s and willing to fully restore his influence in his new area of responsibility.

Therefore, the subversive activities were deliberately launched at this vulnerable point at a time when the change of command was taking place. Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann’s chief of staff, the energetic and, until then, loyally devoted to his former commander, the national-minded Major A. D.

Baron von Lösselholz, had to step down after only a few days.

Mafor Adam sent the unpopular man, who was also embroiled in a serious personal and professional feud with Pittinger, unceremoniously into the wilderness.

In the period that followed, the new commander attempted to take over the “Unterland” League and bring it under his control; however, Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann was able to thwart this thanks to his personal influence.

The temporary friction and misunderstandings between the State Commander and the Working Group caused him a great deal of trouble and—some embarrassment.

A proposal that the working group had submitted to the provincial commander regarding the declaration of commitment aroused the general’s intense indignation, which found expression in a very impassioned letter addressed to the entirely innocent Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann.

Eventually, the situation became so entangled that the Bavarian government had to step in as a mediator.

A final agreement was not concluded until mid-April.

It bore the signatures of Neichsflagge, N.

S.

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A.

P., Oberland, Unterland, V.

V.

Munich, Chiemgau, and the Volunteer Corps.

In the midst of these struggles for recognition, the working group carried out a great deal of practical work by providing street training for the units.

Two large-scale training days stand out from the series of smaller exercises: one in Forftenrieder Park and one on the Fröttmaninger Heide.

In a critical assessment of the first day—which Attorney Holl, in an enthusiastic speech at the comradely gathering following the exercise, described as a milestone in our national unification—the leader of the combat units, Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, stated:

A.: “The troops that gathered on March 25

is the power factor for the political goals of the Working Group; these are völkisch.

To fight for the air and light of the national freedom movement is therefore our most important task.

In the victorious advancement of this movement, we find the best guarantee for the successful reception of our struggle by the outside world.

The group must be uniformly imbued with this spirit.” The following participated in the meeting: Neichsflagge Munich 150, Oberland 481, N.

S.

D.

A.

P. 1300 V.

V.

Munich 865 Lenz 132 sa. 2928 During the march-past, 3,228 fully armed soldiers marched by. The large drill on the Fröttmaninger Heide took place in inclement, cold weather.

The troops’ conduct was nevertheless excellent.

The exercise ended with a march into the city as far as the city limits. 170 The decision regarding the appropriateness and necessity of the large-scale exercises was not uncontested.

The provincial commander, and in particular the chief of staff, opposed the exercises.

That their view was correct from a purely military standpoint cannot be disputed.

But what mattered more in the exercises was to forge the people together internally and to strengthen them through the sight of the masses.

In the same way, we wanted to instill respect in the Marxists and the spineless philistines.

We certainly succeeded in this: the red press spewed venom and bile.

Under the headline “Noth, Hitler, Gerlich,” the “Münchener Post” reported on March 31, 1923, the discovery of a “political shift” in Bavaria.

Dr.

Roth had set himself up as the independent ruler of all patriotic associations.

The Citizens' Council of Zentz–Meyer–Absberg–Gerlich stood at the head of the movement as an action committee.

Opposing them were the V.

V.

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Under Pittinger≠Bauer, which sought to join the B.

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They sought.

The latter supported Cuno and his politics.

The fantasies of the "Münchener Post" were based on the following actual events: The militant groups had presented the chancellor with their statement that the so-called "united front," painstakingly built upon a series of obstructive and diluting compromises, was worthless and must be replaced by an ideological united front of conviction, from which Marxists and politicians who merely carried out orders must be excluded.

Reich Chancellor Cuno was unwilling or unable to come to terms with this position.

The militant organizations therefore long predicted in their organ "Heimatland" that the chancellor would "lose the battle on the Nuhr."

This proclamation was, of course, outrageous in the eyes of the staunch philistines; even the Reds and Pinkies were falling over themselves with "national indignation."

The proposals of the combat associations were the "product of minds gone mad," as the democratic press declared with a superior air.

While all "responsible" politicians showered the chancellor with premature laurels, the wicked combat associations were even so brazen as to, at Cuno's official reception, which the B.

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organized on the occasion of his presence in Munich.

Of course, General Ludendorff also paid his respects to the all-blessing B.

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This gave rise to lively objections, as he dared to espouse and express ideas similar to those of the combat units.

This prompted the party chairman, Rep.

Dr.

Held to launch a sharp attack against General Ludendorff in the “Regensburger Anzeiger.”

Above all, he accused him of violating Bavarian hospitality laws (1!).

General Ludendorff then made it clear and unambiguous that he had every right to live in Munich as a German and would not allow anyone to dictate his politics to him.

The statement by B.

V.

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was directed not only against General Ludendorff, but also against the combat units and the National Socialists.

The “Neue Züricher Zeitung,” the well-known “pro-German” paper, eagerly seized upon the case.

It, however, regarded the whole affair merely as a maneuver by the B.

V.

P. to divert attention from the blunder it had made in the Fuchs-Machhaus trial and to find an opportunity to demonstrate its political reliability and loyalty to the Reich.

Moreover, confidence in this loyalty to the Reich has recently suffered a regrettable setback due to revelations by Press Chief Wilson.

According to these, Privy Councilor Dr.

Heim is said to have made an offer to the Entente in 1919 for all the major states to secede from Prussia.

On April 4, 1923, the same “Neue Züricher Zeitung” wrote: “Hitler has been defeated; he is losing ground with every passing week; his subordinates are already pressing for a decisive blow, the prospects for which are otherwise growing ever bleaker.

Whether a new Hitler offensive will take place in the next 14 days remains to be seen.” The N..

In one respect, at least, you are certainly right: the offensive against Ludendorff triggered a general

struggle within the B.

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And the negation inherent in it against the militant associations and their policies.

The pressure generated counterpressure.

The struggle often took on bitter forms on both sides.

The nationalist front had originally been directed solely against Marxism: the editorial staff of the "Münchener Post," which constantly engaged in the most vile agitation, had to contend with an unwelcome visit from "swastika-wavers."

Now, however, the Kampsderbände found themselves forced to defend themselves against the government, which threatened to disband the Sturmtrupps at the very moment when the German National Freedom Party and other nationalist organizations were being banned and suppressed in Berlin.

The mood reached a fever pitch when the State Court of Justice prepared to take action against nationalist leaders in Bavaria to protect the republic.

It is only from this overheated atmosphere that one can infer that the Kamps bands were carried away into a step that would have been appropriate only if they had been ready for battle as a whole and also ruthlessly determined to go to the bitter end.

But that was not the case from the very beginning.

The combat units were still assembled at the training ground on the Fröttmaninger Heide when the leaders gathered for discussions in the target huts at the Neufreimann firing range.

As an active Reichswehr officer, I kept my distance from these discussions; but what I saw and heard was the disheartening picture of a "war council" of ill repute.

Finally, they agreed to submit a note, presumably in the quiet hope that the government would accept it favorably.

No preparations were made to enforce the demands in the event of a rejection.

The upright soldier Kriebel took on the task of signing and representing the cause.

The note read as follows: "The Working Group of the Valerland Combat Associations submits the following statement to the Bavarian State Government: Several criminal proceedings are currently pending before the State Court in Leipzig against leaders and members of the 172 Patriotic Movement in Bavaria for violations of the Republic Protection Act.

Thus, the editors of the "Miesbacher Anzeiger," Weger and Dietrich, have been summoned to Leipzig,

as has the member of the N.

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Hermann Esser, and a number of other members of our associations.

In addition, criminal proceedings have been initiated against the publisher of “Heimatland,” Hauplmann a.

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Weiß, and against the leader of the National Socialists, Adolf 4 The State Court did not, at least in the former case, make use of the authority provided for in the Republic Protection Act to refer these criminal proceedings to the ordinary Bavarian courts, presumably with the transparent intention of thereby crushing the National Movement in Bavaria as well, with the assistance of the Bavarian government.

In full agreement with the Working Group of Patriotic Combat Associations, Messrs. Weger, Dietrich Eckart, and Esser have refused to appear before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Consequently, an arrest warrant has now been issued against Dietrich Eckart for failure to appear.

The Working Group declares, in full awareness of the gravity of this decision, that it will use all its power to stand by the national men threatened with imprisonment and to prevent the execution of the arrest warrants with the means at its disposal.

At the same time, however, we declare that the defendants, just like all of us, are prepared to face the Bavarian courts.

The Working Group pledged to the Bavarian state government the day before yesterday to place all its military units unconditionally at the disposal of the State Commander for the protection of our fatherland.

If this commitment is not to be an empty formality, then we must demand that the Bavarian government also unconditionally protect us and our people here in Bavaria from the violence that Severing is inflicting upon our like-minded compatriots in Northern Germany. 91 10 includes: 1.

That the Bavarian State Government once and for all refuse to enforce the arrest warrants issued by the State Court against the Bavarian men of pro-Valerland sentiment, 2. 1. submit a motion to the Reich Council for the complete repeal of the Republic Protection Laws and, in the event this motion is not accepted, refuse to continue implementing the Republic Protection Laws in Bavaria.

In view of the danger facing the defendants, the highly agitated mood of our people, and the possibility that this may lead to rash individual actions, the Working Committee requests that the Bavarian State

Government convey its response to the Working Committee of the Patriotic Combat Associations before the end of the day.

The Working Committee of the Patriotic Combat Associations: Reich Flag V.

V.

Munich N.

S.

D Oberland Unterland Beitfreiwilligenforps Münden.

For the copy: signed

Kriebel." A delegation of the leaders handed the document to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, von Knilling.

The Prime Minister took note of the demands.

As had been foreseeable, he held out the prospect of certain efforts to calm the heated tempers; he gave no assurances or promises whatsoever.

The provincial commander remained completely unresponsive to the demands of the combat units. 173 The only option left was to have the troops of the combat units return to their quarters and to commence the negotiations to which the government had agreed.

In any case, the government's conduct succeeded in giving the combat units a pretext for action; it did not yet feel strong enough to engage in a fight of its own accord.

Dr.

Von Knilling commissioned Senior Government Councilor Stausser of the Ministry of Justice to conduct further negotiations with the Workers' Association.

Quite rightly, my chief assistant remarked in a pointed assessment of this point: "Negotiations with Stausser should be rejected for the simple reason that for us this is not at all a matter of legal subtleties, but solely and exclusively a struggle against the destruction of the National Freedom Movement.

We couldn't care less about the lawyers' stance on the laws protecting the republic.

As soon as we let the matter spill over into the legal realm, we are lost from the very beginning." The situation was undoubtedly completely hopeless; in practical terms, the combat units had lost a battle. This was perhaps not generally recognized, because the government, too, showed no desire to overreach and was by no means certain of the success of a showdown.

The "politicians" in the combat units even believed they could feign a success; we soldiers, however, assessed the situation more soberly—and probably more accurately.

I had the following response drafted, which was to be handed over to the Bavarian state government in order to bring the negotiations to a conclusion: “The Working Group of Patriotic Combat Units has taken note with dismay that the Bavarian government is determined to carry out without delay not only the arrests in question but also all further arrests ordered by the Leipzig Revolutionary Tribunal.

The Working Group expressly declares that the legal aspect of the matter is of no interest to it.

It further declares that a large portion of the persons concerned are not affiliated with its organizations.

Nor is it a matter of names and individuals at all, but solely of the fact that it mocks the healthy sentiment of the people when, at a time when the enemy is in the country and constantly advancing, national leaders and other men who have devoted themselves entirely to the service of the patriotic cause are imprisoned by a political court, while international scoundrels and traitors to the fatherland roam freely and undisturbed—in some cases even under the protection of immunity—and are able to carry out their criminal activities.

The Working Group notes with regret that in its struggle for the national necessities of Bavaria and thus of the Reich, it cannot count on the support of the Bavarian government.

It will therefore wage this struggle alone in the future, driven by deep concern for our beloved fatherland, which is being dragged deeper into the abyss day by day through negotiations, compromises, and party maneuvering.

The Working Group notes with regret that the publication of its demands and the resulting negotiations were not initiated by itself, but by the government.” The Bavarian People’s Party skillfully exploited the discord between the government and the Working Group.

Through the deputy Schässer, it succeeded in having the “Bavaria and Reich” League commit to “unconditional loyalty to the state.”

At the same time, Schässer continued his efforts to make the “Unterland” organization uncooperative with the militant groups.

First Lieutenant Hofmann was in a difficult position, all the more so because even the commander did not approve of his political conduct.

The attempts to drive a wedge between the National Socialists and other organizations were carried out with great tenacity.

The enemies of the Working Group were primarily concerned with preventing Hitler’s influence from becoming too great.

In contrast, my thoughts and efforts were directed solely toward securing for Hitler dictatorial political leadership and for Kriebel dictatorial military leadership within the combat leagues.

As a military leader, First Lieutenant Kriebel undoubtedly possessed uncontested authority and was able to assert himself; in political matters, however, each association believed it could go its own way.

The meetings of the working group threatened to degenerate into political discussion evenings in which

every participant wanted to give free rein to his or her eloquence without restraint.

In my view, the Working Group was well on its way to becoming exactly what I was fighting against, namely a parliament.

I was wasting precious time that was needed for more important matters. Since things could not continue this way—after all, I was the host and had made my rooms available—I asked Hitler to set forth the purpose, mission, and political goals of the Working Group in a memorandum.

Hitler's memorandum was intended to determine the political direction of the group so that the endless political debates could be brought to an end.

Hitler fulfilled his task in a masterful manner.

In his memorandum of April 19, 1923, he stated in the introduction: "With the overthrow of the backpack idealists in 1918 and the establishment of the new republican form of government, which satisfied material needs, the truly ideal visions of a great nation—inspiring enthusiasm and a spirit of sacrifice—perished.

Even on the day of its founding, the Republic no longer had the ability to draw from the ranks of its inner supporters the fighting forces it urgently needed for protection, even against mere robbery and looting.

The new state was, after all, devoid of any ideal, so that as early as 1918, and even more so in the spring of 1919, no one was willing to risk their life for it.

Out of necessity, the republican governments turned to the circles of the bourgeoisie they had been fighting, in order to find fighters from their ranks to defend the republic.

In the naive belief that the welfare of the fatherland should take precedence over the prevailing form of government—even if they inwardly rejected it—tens of thousands of German students, former officers, and others

into the field for the republic against the looming internal enemy.

The fundamental belief of the Old Army that the country's armed forces must keep themselves aloof from political considerations was now, following the collapse of the old institution, unfortunately adopted by the new patriotic combat organizations.

With shrewd cunning, the 175 masterminds behind the Berlin protests knew how to whisper to the patriotic combat associations, Freikorps, etc.

that political involvement would be the exclusive preserve of political, i.e.

H. 5 parties.

The same forces that once politicized the Old Army, i.

e.g.,

tried to alienate it from the then-national state, now condemned the politicization of organizations that had to risk the lives of their members to protect the international state.

This situation is primarily attributable to the fact that, since the collapse of 1918, the German people have been sliding further and further down the slippery slope to the left. If the rebirth of the German nation is ever to become a reality, it can only come about through a process of inner moral renewal.

One of the most essential prerequisites for such a spiritual renewal process is the recognition of the following truth: Only those who are willing to die have the right to rule.

This means: the army, as an instrument of the nation, could remain apolitical as long as politics was conducted by a people who, as a result of universal conscription, had to take to the battlefield themselves, man by man, when the time came to make a decision.

But once the nation no longer recognizes the obligation to fight for the fatherland, the right to engage in politics belongs from the outset only to those who are voluntarily prepared to take on the former duty as a new honor.

From this perspective, I therefore protest against the notion that patriotic combat associations have no right to political engagement. On the contrary, what was once perhaps a right is now a duty.

The patriotic combat associations have a duty to think politically and act politically.

The goal of this political activity must always be: the liberation of Germany from internal and external enemies, and the unification of all Germans in one great common fatherland.

But the means to these ends for these organizations is not to speak, but to fight." Hitler defined the task of the combat organizations as follows: "They must ensure, with unrelenting consistency, that Bavaria is made into a nation-state within the borders of the contaminated Reich.

A nation-state that does not wish to negotiate between Germans and non-Germans, but which grants all rights to Germans and leaves only death for those who do not wish to be German.

The patriotic combat associations have the task—perhaps one that will only be fully realized by a later generation—of kindling a hearth for the smoldering renewal in the battlefields of today's Marxist Germany.

They must not allow themselves to be lulled by the phrase "peace and order," which in reality means decay and death, but must be determined to put an end to the order of this empire, to the deathly silence of this nation—if necessary, by force.

They must, in a tireless, daily struggle, remain at the Marxist enemy's throat, yet force the opposition, through constant attacks, to show their true colors and take a stand.

They must not be content with a mere "act of kindness," as is granted, for example, to communists, etc.

are granted, but must fundamentally distinguish between citizens, the

D.

who wish to serve the state, and traitors to the state, that is, those who defame it.

Above all, they must clearly distinguish between national interests and the wishes of the government or

parliamentary wishes.

The national interest is the purification of the nation; the government's interest is peace and quiet; the parliament's interest is stoic patience.

The patriotic struggle groups have, above all, the task of securing the internal prerequisites for the conduct of the external struggle, that is,

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to break the forces that would either prevent the external resistance from beginning or paralyze it later." I would have wished that Hitler's remarks had been adopted without debate as the political program of the Working Group.

Unfortunately, a considerable amount of time was to pass before that happened.

The Working Group was not yet internally consolidated enough for this.

The danger of a lack of a unified, activist attitude was greatly exacerbated in those days by the fact that the "United Patriotic Associations of Bavaria" (V.

V.

V.

B.) sought and found affiliation with the Working Group.

The drill of the combat units on the Fröttmaninger Heide on April 15, 1923, which marked the beginning of the dispute with the Bavarian government, also had particular consequences for me personally.

As leader of the Reichsflagge Munich, I had issued an order to this association in which several Reichswehr officers who belonged to the Reichsflagge were named as drill leaders.

The "Münchener Post," which got hold of this order, printed it verbatim.

She commented: "From this, General Geßler can also see, incidentally, how the Reichswehr in Bavaria puts its fine explanation of officers' political activities into practice." "Provided that the government is still in a position to investigate the matter, and that the agencies under its authority are willing to carry out this investigation, we wish to assist them," she added in her "loyal to the state," staid manner.

On April 19, the "Rote Fahne" called out to Mr. Geßler:

: “Mr. Minister of Defense, you must intervene from Berlin!” Mr. Gessler intervened.

On April 25, 1923, he ordered, among other things: “On repeated occasions, public exercises by associations have taken place, in which individual members of the Reichswehr and even military units have participated.

The reports published in the press regarding this will provide the French with highly welcome material.

Any participation by members of the Reichswehr in such exercises must therefore cease.

In particular, I request that Captain Röhm be relieved of handling such matters.

There has been extensive collaboration with political associations.

These ties must be severed.” Finally, he asked the commander to refrain from political activity himself.

Consequently, in Bavaria as well, the commander of Military District VII prohibited members of the Reichswehr from belonging to patriotic associations.

I resigned as head of the Munich Reichsflagge and handed the position over to my former deputy, Captain Seydel.

From that point on, I also refrained from active participation in the Working Group. 1 Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 177 23.

On May 1,

May 1923 “The art of the true statesman,” Hitler elaborated on the line of thought outlined earlier, “lies in identifying that segment of the nation which is still prepared to stand up for Germany with body and soul; but to heighten this part’s fighting spirit to the utmost by convincing them that the government and state leadership are ideologically [and in spirit] identical with the fighters, d.

H.

In short: to be a country defended by nationalists, but also governed by nationalists.” “Above all, the so-called right-wing politicians can never bring themselves to adopt this clear, unambiguous stance, whereas the leftists are all the more inclined to do the opposite.

While the internationally oriented governments of the Reich hunt down the national element to the death with the most brutal fanaticism, the so-called national governments attempt to “balance things out,” to “bridge” differences; in short, they hover like ghosts over the waters and therefore gain no firm footing anywhere.

While the rest of the Reich, in a subtle Marpist contamination, all too consistently pursues the eradication of the national element, B.

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the Baparian government, a so-called “matlonal-bourgeois” one, to mediate on an equal footing

between Raterland separatists, traitors to the fatherland, and patriotic heroes.

They are both placed on the same level and thus denied the inherent right, which the unpatriotic naturally do not deserve at all.

But this ultimately robs the patriotic elements of the innermost conviction to fight for a cause.

Indeed, on the contrary, their fear grows day by day that a struggle for the Fatherland would one day bleed to death from the same dagger thrusts as the resistance of the heroic armies once did on French soil." This policy of the governments could only lead to the struggle on the Ruhr collapsing one day.

Germany was practically at war with France.

Nevertheless, nothing was done to fully assert the national will to resist.

The "truce" of Belhmann-Hollweg, of ill-fated memory, had been declared once again.

The cowardice, wretchedness, and indifference in the camp of the so-called bourgeoisie were simply beyond compare.

The tolerance of Red excesses was a blatant betrayal of the Ruhr fighters.

Admittedly, only toward the fighters; for the official Ruhr resistance had long since reached a dead end.

The government and the trade unions, which presented themselves as the leaders of the resistance, limited themselves to handing out and accepting the Ruhr donations paid for by the entire population.

When later, though not always without justification, the entrepreneurs were accused of having enriched themselves in part unjustifiably with funds from the Ruhr donation, the trade unions were no less selective in their choice of how to use the funds.

Some well-funded socialist s.

A.

will look back on these Ruhr donations with satisfaction.

This type of "campaign management" was, of course, very much to the liking of the red bigwigs: it filled their association coffers and demanded no sacrifices from them.

The "immature" members of patriotic associations and German workers were allowed to make the donations on the Ruhr front.

The Social Democrats, however, and the parties of like mind combined business with pleasure and took this opportunity to have their nationalist stance officially certified once again.

Their behavior, however, reached the height of defiance when they called for large demonstrations on May 1

May.

One might have expected the Reich government to have countered this mockery of the “united front” and for the non-Socialist parties and the national leagues and associations to have unanimously rejected this challenge.

Just imagine: Germany is fighting a desperate battle for its very existence; at the same time, the red banners of insurrection are being unfurled across the country.

Nothing happened: with criminal laxity and spinelessness, the “national” bourgeoisie accepted the slap in the face.

The Working Group wanted to spare at least the national Bavaria this humiliation.

Together with the United Patriotic Associations of Bavaria, it submitted the following resolution to the Bavarian state government: “The Working Group of the Patriotic Combat Associations and the United Patriotic Associations of Bavaria take the liberty of informing the state government of the following: The Working Group and the V.

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have learned that the United Proletarian Self-Help Associations, together with the Socialist and Communist Party, intend to hold their celebration on May 1

May intend to hold their celebration with processions of demonstrators through the city center in a manner that can be interpreted as nothing other than a deliberate and intentional provocation of the entire bourgeoisie.

Recalling the repercussions of the parades and rallies of November 7,

November 1918, the A.

G.

And V.

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B.

B.

There is an imminent danger that the celebration on May 1, 1923, may result in unintended serious harm to the entire law-abiding population.

The state government has apparently not only failed to take any measures to protect the bourgeoisie, but has even approved the inflammatory and dangerous demonstration, which, with reference to May 1, 1919—the day of Munich's liberation from the rule of the councils—must be perceived as a slap in the face of the entire population.

For this reason, A.

G.

and V.

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Determined to prevent the mass rallies planned by the socialist and proletarian militant associations.

Should the government take it upon itself to suppress the socialist rally—which amounts to a declaration of war and is directed against the national sentiment of the broadest circles—it may count on the unreserved support of the patriotic associations." Munich, April 27,

April 1923.

The Working Committee of the Patriotic Combat Associations, V.

V.

V.

Bavaria. 179 The rally aimed to prompt the state leadership to intervene at the last minute.

The Working Group expressed the expectation that the government would put a stop to provocative demonstrations by declaring a state of emergency and was willing to place itself unreservedly at its disposal for this purpose.

Of course, there had been no thought whatsoever of taking action against the state authorities.

The government of the Free State of Bavaria could not bring itself to intervene. "Objective" bourgeois philistine newspapers even noted that the Red marches on May 1

would have been permitted even during the monarchy.

They forgot, however, that the monarchy had collapsed not least because of this false tolerance.

Thus, the Working Group of Patriotic Combat Associations decided to act independently.

It intended to assemble on May 1

May in a number of squares in Munich to counter the Red rally with a Nationalist one.

Thus,

A, the crossings were to be occupied to prevent the Red processions from marching into the inner city.

The working group's meetings, in which I did not participate, reportedly revealed a telling picture of a lack of street-level cohesion.

At first, everyone was enthusiastic about it, then the "reservations" arose.

The lack of internal cohesion and uniformity among individual groups, such as V.

V.

Munich and the Zeitfreiwilligenkorps, paralyzed the decisiveness and willingness to take responsibility of their leaders.

The government and parties exploited this weakness and attempted to thwart a unified approach by the associations.

On April 30, 1923, the situation came to a head.

According to reports that had come in—which, however, later turned out to be false—massive amounts of money had been distributed; foreign communists were to be brought together in Munich.

In the afternoon of that day, I was summoned by His Excellency von Loflor for a meeting with Hitler.

Hitler reproached the commander, arguing that a refusal of support by the Reichswehr would constitute a breach of given assurances.

The general replied that he was well aware he would be strongly condemned for this, but that he did not see himself in a position to intervene helpfully.

Only when support from the commander of the Reichswehr was also ordered—and the reliability of some units was consequently called into question—did the Working Group decide during the night to deploy part of the units the next morning, not to the locations originally planned, but en masse to Oberwiesenseld.

Early in the morning of May 1,

May, National Socialists and the Reichsflagge moved to their assembly points at the Oberwiesenfeld parade ground.

The Munich Reichsflagge was commanded by my successor in the leadership.

Ober-180 assembled at the Marimilianeum.

The Wikingbund also made a brief guest appearance at Oberwiesenfeld.

Personally, I had to comply with the order issued to me just a few days earlier by the State Commander to keep myself informed of all events.

I went to my office at the military district headquarters at the usual time and soon realized that my telephone was being tapped.

The military district command was extremely upset that part of the units at Oberwiesenfeld had been watered down and blamed me for it.

And so—a striking success of the Free State of Bavaria's governance—on May 1,

May: the combat units on Oberwiesenfeld and the May Day demonstrators on Theresienwiese.

At 10:05 a.m., the police chief called me and asked me to mediate with the combat units.

Since I wished to refrain from any interference, I declined.

At 10:20 a.m., the Commissioner withdrew the request.

At 11:15 a.m., the combat units asked me to take over the water supply at Oberwiesenseld.

I forwarded the request to the appropriate authorities without concerning myself with its execution and implementation.

After the handover and safekeeping of the water, the combat units moved from Oberwiesenfeld to Zeopoldstraße and Ludwigstraße and marched through the Siegestor with their flags flying.

One thing had been achieved in any case: the threatened mobilization of the combat units, which had also been announced via leaflets, had dampened the musicians' enthusiasm for the May 1st rally.

May.

Only a small group had heeded the leaders' call to the Theresienwiese, and even this group showed no inclination to fight and behaved with restraint.

The march of the combat units had prevented it from happening that, on the very day when the Red flags of the Councils had been taken down in Munich by brave Freikorps, four years later the same Red flags would be carried through the streets of the capital.

The units had spared their hometown of Munich this disgrace.

In Munich—the only major city in the Reich—a situation had not been tolerated that would have revealed to the jubilant enemies the full extent of the internal weakness and hopelessness of the struggle that the German government, ostensibly determined to the utmost to defend the Ruhr, had presumed to wage.

For the Working Group itself, however, the action of May 1

May a complete success.

If it had already demonstrated its lack of internal unity during the preparatory phase, May 1

May itself revealed that a number of organizations were only of limited use for the struggle.

May 1

May reiterated the lesson of April 15

that action promises success only if it can and will be carried out to its ultimate conclusion.

However, the Bavarian government drew the conclusion from the outcome of May 1

that it need not take the demands and threats of the Workers' Association too seriously and that it would eventually subdue them.

The Rep.

Schässer of the Bavarian People's Party, however, went so far as to express the view that "Clemenceau would have put these people up against the wall"; naturally the Nationalists and not the people under the red flags, as I must add to avoid misunderstandings.

However, judging Clemenceau by his conduct during the war, he would certainly have put the others up against the wall.

To demonstrate its strength and resolve to the whole world, the government initiated a show trial against the "rebels" of May 1

— naturally, only the Nationalists! — under Section 127 of the Penal Code, a trial that dragged on for years.

From time to time, whenever it seemed expedient, the files were pulled out of the drawer again and new interrogations were threatened or carried out.

It was not until early 1927 that the proceedings were discontinued.

Certainly much to the chagrin of District Attorney Dresse, who had made it his specialty to 9 m. 5.

I was happy to take on the task of dealing with the evil Nationalists and National Socialists, and it was my duty to do so with kindness and love.

Ee e 1 I had the privilege of later being subjected to a thorough interrogation. To bring the matter to a proper and dignified conclusion, in the summer of 1927 the "Investigative Committee of the Bavarian Landtag" once again examined the events of "that alone."

On May 3,

May 1923, General von Lossow informed me in the presence of Generals von Epp, von Danner, and Baron von Kreß, as well as 350 officers and non-commissioned officers, of my dismissal from my post and my transfer, which I had requested in Berlin, to serve as company commander in Berlin. When asked if I wished to make a statement, I declined.

Since I had been convicted of a minor offense, I had to justify myself.

On the same day, I requested my discharge from active military service. On the 4th

May, General von Lossow granted me leave at my request pending a decision on my request for discharge.

For the time being, First Lieutenant Meier was to take over my duties at the Military District Command.

This marked the end of my service in its previous form.

From the work

which I had built up over the years through self-sacrificing and responsible work, I was now forcibly torn away.

It is just as in human life as in war: you are surrounded by enemies at all times and in all places and wage a life-and-death struggle with them without being wounded; but suddenly a stray, unnoticed bullet strikes you and brings you down.

The impact on my staff was extraordinary.

All the officers submitted a request for dismissal to the new commander. “As for the simultaneous resignation of the gentlemen,” Captain Seydel explained in a statement justifying his action to the chief of staff of the military district command, “which surprised even me in its unanimity, I ask, to prevent any misunderstandings, to be allowed to expressly state that neither Captain Röhm nor I exerted even the slightest influence in this matter.

To my knowledge, there was also no meeting, consultation, or general discussion among the gentlemen regarding this matter.

I can only explain this consensus by the personal relationship of trust in which they all stand by Captain Röhm: objectively, they are likely motivated by the same reasons as I am.” In the following days, I took my leave of my loyal colleagues, released them from the obligations they had undertaken toward me, and left their cooperation and obligations to the new commander.

The majority of the gentlemen declined this.

On May 10, 1923, I handed the city commander, General von Danner, a detailed written complaint against General von

Lossow.

The commander responded with a dignified, conciliatory statement, to which I again submitted a counterstatement.

After introductory remarks and an explanation of the life's mission I had set for myself, I stated therein: "I have not for a single hour lost sight of the clear and straight path I have set out on, and I will never abandon it, 5.

The revolution and the time of its fulfillment have taught me—and I was aware of this from the very beginning—that in the unwavering pursuit of this goal I would incur the furious hatred of the traitors to the fatherland and the beneficiaries of the revolution, that I would face the incomprehension and aversion of the indifferent, and that I would have to forgo official approval

support and encouragement from superiors from the very beginning.

Only then, however, could I—and this is my experience of war—count on a tried and tested group of reliable, loyal comrades-in-arms who linked their fate to mine and trusted me blindly, provided I did not deviate from my chosen course.

I was not mistaken in my assumption.

I was fiercely opposed, and I alone bore the responsibility for everything.

I never expected any cover and was prepared to face the consequences of my actions at any time, and I always stood in front of my colleagues." The statement then touched on the successes achieved through my work and my cooperation with the patriotic associations.

In this vein, I concluded by stating: "I must also personally ensure that the commitments I have made are fulfilled.

I have no desire to forfeit the good name I have maintained flawlessly during the war and the revolutionary period in this manner and to become a traitor to men who have trusted me.

I must make their struggle for their rights my own and fight for them, for I do not wish to give up; and therefore I must also fight to have the humiliation and shame imposed upon me by the recent measures removed from me. I have never left the Commander-in-Chief in any doubt as to my intentions.

I have found a sympathetic ear in the most confidential matters and believe that I have not abused the trust placed in me.

Those on the outside knew this well; they will be able to explain the sudden withdrawal of this trust only by the fact that I have lost it.

I must state that the situation into which the 1st

was not of my own making, and that I was not ultimately driven into the difficulties—the resolution of which, disregarding the greater goal, is considered the most important matter of the Fatherland—by the position taken by the Provincial Commander.

I believe that once the commotion and aftermath of the May events have subsided—events that are,

after all, merely an episode in the greater development, in the drive toward a decision—the main course will be restored even in the field of work in which I was active. “It can only be reestablished if the State Commander resolves to subject the measures he has ordered against me—measures whose effect amounts to the destruction of the work accomplished thus far—to a review.” Now the activities of those circles, for whom I have always been a stumbling block, are beginning to take shape, aiming to take over the fruits and legacy of my work.

The “Bavaria and Reich” League deemed the time ripe to restore the influence it had previously lost through my efforts.

On the other hand, however, noble friends both within and outside the Reichswehr also endeavored to mediate; among them was Baron von Fürstenberg, whom I held in high esteem and who was close to General von Lossow from their shared wartime experiences in Turkey.

After some back-and-forth, the commander granted me a meeting on May 29, 1923, which proceeded and concluded satisfactorily.

The result was that General von Lossow returned my letter of resignation to me.

In the meantime, however, Dr.

Geßler, who had learned of the submission of my resignation, had immediately ordered my dismissal.

Now it was General von Lossow who vigorously opposed this and succeeded in having the Reichswehr Minister’s order rescinded.

To restore my health, which had been severely strained by the recent events, I requested a four-week recuperative stay at the military convalescent home in Bad Reichenhall.

General von Lossow immediately arranged for my admission there; from mid-June to mid-July, I spent quiet and refreshing days in the beautiful sanatorium under the comradely medical care of Dr.

Staudinger, with excellent accommodations and meals, I spent peaceful and refreshing days.

To avoid breaking the continuity later, I will include here my further military career up to my discharge from the Imperial Army.

F I had asked General von Lossow to temporarily assign me to the artillery and cavalry to expand my practical military knowledge; the commander graciously granted my request. 184 On August 15,

August, I arrived at the Grafenwöhr military training area and was assigned there to Artillery Regiment 7 for service.

I still vividly recall the expenses incurred at that time, which within a few days amounted to fantastically high sums.

Perhaps it is not without interest to recall such monstrous sums once again.

They illustrate more than anything else our situation at the time and the rapidly advancing collapse of

the German currency.

I received the following command funds in retroactive payments: on September 1, 4,300,000 marks; on September 5, 6 million marks; and on September 8, 150 million marks.

From September 12

onward, I was assigned to the 6th

Cavalry Regiment 17 under the command of Nittmeister Baron von Speidel and was permitted to participate in the maneuvers in the Grafenwöhr area with this squadron, at times also serving as a squadron leader.

I have particularly fond memories of those days.

I felt free and happy to be just a soldier again and to be able to forget everything else.

Many critics, most of whom are not qualified to comment on this at all, reproach the Reichswehr soldier for continuing to serve in the Republic's army under these or those circumstances.

I have always understood, and still do today, that so many officers of character, despite severe humiliation and disappointment, could not bring themselves to leave the service.

Service in the army is the finest profession and will remain so for all time.

And it is unspeakably difficult for a man who was born and raised to be a soldier to renounce the purpose of his life.

On September 19, 1923, I returned to Munich from the maneuvers, eager to see where General von Lossow's orders would take me next.

After a discussion at the maneuvering grounds, the general had aroused joyful hopes in me; I was therefore fully committed to the cause.

Why I decided on September 26, 1923, to submit my resignation once again can only be understood after describing the political events of the summer of 1923.

As a swan song to my service at the Military District Command, which

May, I would like to share a few excerpts from a document to conclude. "Good" Munich "friends," as I was later able to ascertain to my great satisfaction, had sent the letter to Berlin to give me a kick in the teeth.

The humor in it is so subtly calculated—admittedly unintentionally—that I believe I can thus bring this section to a conciliatory close.

I only regret that, for reasons I have already mentioned, I must omit some particularly beautiful passages and can reproduce only parts of it.

Among other things, the highly honorable author—for such a friendly compatriot she is—writes: “The National Socialists in Bavaria are methodically preparing for a violent coup in the coming months.

They are being supported in this by the affiliated organizations Reschsflagge (Captain Heiß, Captain Röhm), Bund 185 Oberland (Lieutenant a.

D.

Oeslerreicher, Dr.

Weber), and the Blücher League.

Master Builder Rudolph Schäfer and Royal

Prussian

Lieutenant a.

D.

Timme), the former volunteer formations, in which the university students are largely organized (Colonel a.

ret.

V.

Lenz, First Lieutenant (ret.)

D.

Murr) and the bourgeois emergency police, founded only last year (iron wholesaler Zeller)!

Two-thirds of the Reichswehr in Bavaria and at least half of the Bavarian State Police will render unconditional allegiance to Hitler and Röhm.

The remainder will maintain benevolent neutrality.

It must be acknowledged on this occasion that the Bavarian State Commander von Lossow, as well as General von Epp and several high-ranking officers of the Reichswehr and the State Police in Bavaria, are thoroughly opposed to the use of force.

However, in my opinion, this kind of “half-hearted neutrality” could prove dangerous precisely for these men.

And with that I come to the main point: The actual mastermind of the Hitler movement, however, is Captain Nöhm, who works in Military District Command VII on the staff of the Infantry Leader.

His right-hand man is Lieutenant d.

Ref.

Meunzert, who is also the liaison officer from Military District Command VII to the political division of the Munich Police Directorate.

This connection with Department VI is very important to Captain Röhm and very useful to him, especially since Captain Röhm regularly acts as a court-sworn expert in all water-related cases.

It is, however, an irony of fate that the majority of water-related incidents involve Captain Röhm himself.

Furthermore, the head of Department VI (i.e., the Political Police) of the Munich Police Directorate, Government Councilor Dr.

Bernreuther, himself a National Socialist, naturally and unreservedly contributes to all these matters alongside his friend Röhm. (Note from me: On this point, to my regret, the author is not entirely correct.) In addition to General Ludendorff, who gives this movement the greatest possible support, and the well-known old chatterbox Dietrich Eckart (a regular, by the way—at the Fledermaus Bar in Munich!), Hitler, Röhm, Heiß, Government Councilor Bernreuther, and Lieutenant Neunzert are thus considered potential leaders.

In addition, Major Fader on the staff of the Infantry Commander, Major Keller on the staff of the Artillery Commander, and Captain Seydel in Captain Röhm's office—all of these gentlemen in Military District Command VII, and simultaneously in the National Socialist Movement, although they are more active elsewhere—are certainly worth noting, as is the understanding shown by Military District Command VII in Munich, for today it is Captain Röhm, Lieutenant Neunzert, Major Faber, Major Keller.

Captain Seidel, and last but not least, Captain Heiß, who know how to accommodate the wishes of the National Socialists.

To satisfy such requests from time to time, Captain Röhm and Captain Heiß, as well as their entourage, spare no means.

Within the Hitler movement, there is also much talk of "Quartermaster General Röhm," with * Faber and Keller, Captains Heitz and Sepdel, and Lieutenant d.

Ref.

Neunzert, and finally Government Councilor Dr.

Bernreulber and Senior Government Councilor Obermaier, who is also active in Department VIa of the Munich Police Directorate, are designated for leading positions in the upcoming Hundred Days' regime.

For many in the Bavarian People's Party expect that, should "Hitler's German Freedom Movement"—as Hitler and his followers grandiosely label their deliberate violent actions—succeed, it will likely have only a short lifespan due to the countermeasures already in place; However, experience shows that

great damage can be inflicted even in a short period of time." (My comment: The author was very well informed about the events in the Bavarian People's Party!) "It is telling that General von Epp has already had a motor vehicle secured for himself 'for all occasions' from the vehicle fleet of Military District Command VII by an officer who is absolutely loyal to him.

This caution seems understandable, however, when one considers that General von Epp, who is aware of at least some aspects of Captain Röhm's plans that threaten the state, has become a fierce opponent of Röhm.

In the Budget Committee of the Bavarian State Parliament on the 3rd

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A political debate ensued regarding the National Socialists' demonstration in Munich, which had partly failed due to the firm stance of the Bavarian State Commander, General von

Lossow (who had apparently become aware of the gravity of the situation).

What the Minister of the Interior said during the debate on the march of the B.

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in Oberwiesenseld—during which the participants were fully equipped in military attire and provided with ample supplies of water—was completely inadequate and utterly unsatisfactory.

He had to admit that the members of the National Socialists and other affiliated organizations such as the Reichsflagge, Bund Oberland, Bund Blücher, Notpolizei, etc.

had received water, but said that the water had not come from the Reichswehr.

In response to the subsequent direct inquiry by Representative Euer (Social Democrat) and Dr.

Müller-Meiningen (Democrat) to the minister: "Where did the water come from?", the minister could not provide an answer.

Had the Minister of the Interior presented the true facts—which, as it happened, were not known to him in their entirety at the time—to the State Parliament, there would have been a scandal of the first order in the Bavarian police force. 5 From me: The Investigative Committee of the Bavarian State Parliament made up for this omission in 1927.) Captain Ernst Röhm, while abusing his position in Military District Command VII, has always understood, in a calculated manner, how to keep himself in the background as much as possible while nevertheless ensuring that all these water diversions and the like received the greatest possible official support.

Precisely the fact that Captain Röhm is still working at Military District Command VII today, and furthermore, that the head of the Political Police of the notorious Division Vla of the Munich Police

Department, Government Councilor Dr.

Bernreutber, the closest friend of Captain Röhm, constantly covers for him ("Röhm") at all times, naturally facilitates Captain Röhm and his entourage's activities on a large scale, which border on high treason.

For he has, in the meantime, in an autocratic manner, managed to establish his own department with a full-fledged staff within Military District Command VII.

These are long-retired former officers, all of whom are housed in the offices of Military District Command VII (although not on the official payroll) and are naturally paid by none other than Captain Röhm.

It would be interesting, though obvious, to know where Captain Röhm has been obtaining the substantial funds for these purposes for nearly two years.

It should also be noted here that the plan for the military field exercise in Neufreimann was drawn up by the 1st

General Staff officer at Military District Command VII, Major Hühnlein, himself a Hitler supporter.

Furthermore, it is stated that all the National Socialist members coming from outside the area—members of the secret organization Reichsflagge, the Oberland League, the Blücher League, the Zeitfreiwillige, etc.—who were called up for the May Action, were in the area from the night of Monday, April 30

April to Tuesday, May 1,

May 1923, received lodging and meals at the Pioneer Barracks in Munich.

It is also beyond doubt that the First General Staff Officer in Military District Command VII, Major Hühnlein, was already with Hitler and Captain a.

May in the early morning hours was already with Hitler and Captain a.

D.

Göring at Oberwiesenseld and that Hitler and Captain (ret.)

retired

Göring that reinforcements were being brought in from outside against Hitler.

Of course, Hühnlein also stood by his good friend Hitler with advice in the situation that had arisen at the time and, in any case, revealed to him the measures being considered by the Bavarian State Commander that were known to him.

The Bavarian government has requested a report from the Bavarian State Commander, General von Lossow, regarding various incidents during the military operation in which Die ee is said to have been

indirectly involved.

One can already guess what the outcome will be. I was informed confidentially on Saturday morning by a high-ranking officer that the former Bavarian Minister-President and current District President of Upper Bavaria, Mr. von Kahr, as well as Mr. Pöhner, the former Munich police chief, and other influential gentlemen, are personally exerting all their influence to put a certain amount of pressure on the Bavarian State Commander or his subordinate offices in Military District Command VII regarding the submission of the requested report to the government.

In particular, with a fervor more befitting a nobler cause, they take up the cause of Captain Röhm, whose machinations are gradually coming to light, and especially highlight his earlier great military merits.

For if Captain Röhm and his entourage were to be expelled from the 7th Military District Command, where they have long since ceased to belong, then, so calculated his backers at the time—such as von Kahr, Pöhner, Dr.

Bernreuther, and the current police president Nortz—the latter of whom can be compared to a weather vane—if Captain Röhm cannot keep his mouth shut, then they would all be severely exposed and their role would be over.

In the background, they fear the dreaded State Court of Justice, which protects the republic, which is why they are making every effort to keep Captain Röhm in check at least one more time.

Deep down, they long for the moment of reckoning, when they will put an end to all their worries once and for all.

The immediate suspension of Captain Röh and the prompt initiation of a thorough investigation into the scandalous events in Military District Command VII is a matter of necessity to prevent worse things from happening, at least for the time being. (My comment: Finally, the redeeming word!) The situation in Bavaria has undoubtedly worsened, and if the National Socialists and V.

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, the National Socialist movement would gradually wither away, and that is certainly not part of the program of Messrs. Hitler, Röhm, Dr.

Bernreuther, and their backers.

In conclusion, one can safely say that certain sections of the Munich Reichswehr and State Police would have been prepared to join forces with the National Socialists, but the Bavarian government, which viewed the activities of the National Socialists and the V.

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, can no longer put a stop to these events unless it decides to take decisive action." Any addition to this heartfelt report by a noble soul would diminish its impact.

It is just as the experienced soldier is wont to say: Whatever you do, it's wrong! 24.

The German Combat League. 55 combat units withdrew in protest from the government and the Reichswehr.

For the Working Group as such, the events of May 1

May, in any case, had the positive effect of demonstrating which groups were determined to speak and which to act. The 188 leaders and groups who had joined hands on May 1

May to join the struggle were more firmly and closely united than before.

The talkers dropped out.

With its ranks strengthened, the Working Group was better able to fulfill the lofty tasks it had set for itself.

Long speeches and drawn-out deliberations were replaced by brief, concise discussions, most of which were led by the military leader of the combat units, First Lieutenant Kriebel.

The military staff had occupied several rooms at the "Rheinischer Hof" hotel, where intensive organizational work was now carried out under the direction of the military leader, at whose side I was later to stand.

Meanwhile, First Lieutenant Rolf Reiner served as an administrative officer under First Lieutenant Kriebel.

Reiner was a capable, highly capable young officer, a man of integrity, strength, and selfless sincerity.

Determined efforts were made to strengthen the internal cohesion of the units; in purely numerical terms, too, the combat units grew surprisingly strong after May 1.

In particular, the Reichsflagge Munich grew considerably.

In particular, the Reichsflagge Munich grew considerably.

New connections were established with leading political figures.

Thus, among other things, a lively exchange of ideas developed with State Secretary Claß.

In this context, Böhner took a more prominent role, while Hitler remained in the background.

The discussions focused primarily on the events in the Ruhr region.

Numerous leaders from the Ruhr region came to us because they knew that only here would they find unreserved understanding.

Unfortunately, they often overestimated our means of power.

Serious men with hearts beating fervently for the fatherland came, but unfortunately, there were also quite a few empty talkers, windbags, and—impostors who wanted to make a good business out of the Ruhr struggle.

Some of these supposedly persecuted “Geheimbundler” roamed all over Germany, telling horror stories and, above all, begging.

Of course, the inevitable “informers” were also present.

A supposedly mysterious leader from the Ruhr region spoke grandly of a powerful secret national workers’ organization that was said to be on the verge of striking against the French.

Whether such an organization had ever existed at all, or on any significant scale, could not be determined; in any case, it never came into action.

The manufacturer Grandel from Augsburg, who knew how to outwardly project an air of superior calm while his nerves were actually at their wits’ end at the time (during his later imprisonment in Berlin, he suffered a complete mental breakdown), served primarily as the intermediary between Class and our circle.

I hold Class and his patriotic zeal in high regard.

His “German History,” when I first got my hands on it at the end of 1914, opened up new insights for me and completely captivated me. I cannot, however, shake the impression that at the time, in order to secure our alliance, he fostered exaggerated hopes in us, of which he himself was perhaps not entirely convinced.

For the famous “Ruhr Miracle,” which he conjured up before us hopeful and expectant readers, later turned out to be a mirage and vanished into insubstantial mist.

Meanwhile, the external situation in Germany had significantly worsened.

The French, in unrestrained possession of power, demanded Germany’s complete submission.

No power on earth stood by defenseless Germany.

Poland and Czechoslovakia had once again been drawn into a conspiracy against Germany.

Faced with Germany’s powerlessness, Italy had to side with the stronger party; England had more important matters to attend to in the Near East.

At home, the seeds of the united front were taking root; the Social Democrats could well be satisfied with the results of their policies.

Schlageter fell, a second Schill, a victim of French bullets for Germany’s honor.

Severing’s police cannot be absolved of blame for the fact that he fell prey to the henchmen of the hereditary enemy.

In his memory, the combat associations held a solemn rally on Königsplatz in Munich.

Alongside Hitler and Kriebel, the Protestant pastor Joch, a true German minister of God, spoke about how our Lord in heaven surely wants him and how we need him.

Following the ceremony at Königsplatz, the Catholic memorial service took place in the basilica.

Here, too, the noble, German-minded Benedictine fathers had done everything in their power to honor the German hero.

Abbot Schachleitner delivered a solemn, truly German memorial address.

For a while, Schlageter’s heroic death had captivated the German people.

But the echo failed to materialize and gave way to a dull despondency.

The heroes who, like Schlageter, gave their lives for the fatherland

Had to witness that those in power not only failed to understand their struggle, but in many cases viewed it with hostility.

They felt abandoned and withdrew in bitterness.

On July 4

July, Captain Seydel organized a grand Reich Flag Evening at the Bürgerbräukeller, which I attended.

After the

After Seydel’s opening remarks, Heiß took the floor, followed by the Dean with a fiery speech.

General Ludendorff, who graced the evening with his distinguished presence, was enthusiastically celebrated.

The following evening, in addition to Kriebel and Heiß, numerous friendly Neichs≠wehr officers gathered in Captain Göring’s hospitable company.

On the 21st

and 22

July, the Pioneers held their annual celebration in Ingolstadt, attended by His Majesty the King, General Ludendorss, and General von Epp.

The manner in which King Ruprecht addressed General Ludendorff on this festive occasion deeply touched our patriotic sensibilities. 100 Alongside National Socialist storm troopers from Munich, a

detachment of the Munich Reich Flag also took part in the celebration.

In August, a flag dedication ceremony and a large parade of the S.

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took place.

The nationalist pioneer Dr.

Arnold Ruge was brought before a judge for a speech in which he allegedly incited the murder of Jews and was sentenced to a long prison term—without probation.

On September 2, 1923, the first major “German Day” took place in Nuremberg.

Nearly the entire Reich flag, the majority of the S.A.

The R.

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P.

And the “Oberland” had gathered to participate in Nuremberg.

The old German city was awash in a sea of flags; the reception by the entire population, especially in the working-class neighborhoods, was overwhelming.

Around noon on September 2,

the leaders and guests of honor, including General Ludendorff, His Royal

Highness Prince Ludwig Ferdinand, First Lieutenant Kriebel, and Adolf Hitler, had taken up position at the Hauptmarkt to watch the seemingly endless columns of combat units march past them.

The resolute march past of the battle-ready German men sparked unprecedented jubilation.

Leaders and troops were showered with flowers.

As the last unit of the combat formations, I personally led the Reich flag of Southern Bavaria past.

The Munich Reichsflagge was enthusiastically celebrated for its exceptional discipline.

The storm troopers, who marched first behind me, were led at that time by the unforgettable Lieutenant Casella, who, through his demeanor on that day, almost surpassed himself.

Likewise, the main unit, in which the many officers in particular stood in rank and file, decorated with medals and decorations, presented an excellent picture.

I spent the night of September 2 with my men

On straw mattresses in the mortar unit; both during the march to the assembly point on the morning of September 2

As during the return march to Fürth, minor clashes with misguided Red compatriots were inevitable, but these did not end well for the attacking Marxists.

Compared to the massive mobilization of the combat units, the other patriotic associations and clubs (officers' and regimental clubs, the "Bavaria and Reich" League, Wiking, etc.) could not compete on a global scale.

The combat units were at the zenith of their power.

An eagle circled gracefully in the sky, a symbol of that memorable day.

The leaders gathered in Nuremberg for brief discussions; Dr.

Pittinger had also arrived to be on hand just in case.

German Day was the birthday of the "German Combat League."

The Kampfbund, signed by Weber, Heiß, and Hitler, issued the following "manifesto" drafted by Captain Weiß and Gottfried Feder: 191 "Every people determines its own fate—freedom or slavery.

The destiny of a people is shaped by the will, which is guided by knowledge.

From knowledge and will must the decisive deed be born.

The fist of the enemy now rests upon our fatherland.

The Treaty of Versailles is a death sentence for Germany as an independent state and as a nation; our domestic life is being undermined by the forces of revolution.

Revolution and failure are inextricably and causally linked.

G —— b The patriotic movement has arisen from the will to overcome the revolution and its destructive effects both internally and externally.

It was born of the realization that only a people willing to make sacrifices and a spirit of self-sacrifice can change and master destiny.

The liberation of the German people from the nameless misery of our time is our goal.

T I To free our fatherland from bondage and disgrace.

We want freedom. Freedom must be fought for through the people's national self-help.

The new German state established in Weimar cannot be the bearer of the German freedom movement, for its existence depends on the will of the enemy.

The struggle for the complete independence of the patriotic movement from all revolutionary and non-truly patriotic governments is therefore a primary prerequisite for its success.

We are a patriotic struggle movement, not a "party"!

We do not engage in party politics, but seek to be fighters and to gather fighters on the path to true freedom, fighters against everything that stands in our way as obstacles. 5 g & We fight above all against the 88 of the external enemy: the Marxist movement, the International in every form, Judaism as a source of decay in national life, and pacifism.: u.) We fight against the spirit of the Weimar Constitution, the policy of appeasement, the parliamentary system with its blind worship of the majority; we are opponents of the rule of international capital and of the utterly destructive class struggle. \ > REs ö We combat all signs of decay that lead to the destruction of physical and mental strength as the foundation of national resilience.: 2 The bearers of this struggle are the combat associations.

They form the spiritual forge for the struggle for liberation.

Their task is the reawakening of the defensive spirit and manly discipline in the German heart. 5 5 5; The ranks of our organizations include German men who, in the spirit of the old front-line fighters of 1914, are ready to live and die for their fatherland; above all, the self-sacrificing German youth, for whom Schlageter's death in battle offers a shining example of duty and loyalty.

The unification of the combat units into a single patriotic combat league guarantees the victory of our movement. "Brothers, this cannot go on, let us stand together, do not tolerate it any longer!

Freedom, your tree is rotting away, Everyone on the beggar's staff soon sinks into the grave of hunger, To arms!" Through a fighting community to a united nation!

The German nation encompasses all German tribes within a German Reich.

The German state is the homeland of the Germans.

It is nationalistic.

Citizenship must be earned.

It is linked to the right to bear arms and dependent on the fulfillment of civic duties in the German spirit. The German Reich is not a unitary state with a central government and provincial administrations, but a federal state in the spirit of Bismarck, in which the state personality of the individual states is preserved.

The exercise of the rights and means of power necessary for the Reich's authority abroad is the exclusive task of the Reich.

The concentration of state power in a single center corresponds to the German character.

The bearer of state power is assisted by the best of the people as advisors.

All branches of economic activity must serve the aims and purposes of a true national economy.

In times of need, the economy is placed exclusively at the service of the Fatherland.

Private property is recognized and protected by the state as the foundation of value-creating work.

Expropriation through tax laws is an abuse of state power.

The dominance of excessive financial powers in the state and economy must be broken; capital and the economy must not form a state within a state.

The education of youth must be guided in the spirit of patriotism and the people, on a Christian foundation.

Its goal is the formation of character.

Schools, the stage, literature, the press, art, and cinema must be placed in the service of German renewal.

Those who fight and bleed for their fatherland are entitled to the gratitude of the fatherland.

This is expressed in the state's concern for the welfare and well-being of the fighters and war victims and in extensive housing assistance.

Our legal system requires a thoroughgoing renewal in the spirit of the German and national sense of justice.

We need laws to protect the fatherland. Anyone who betrays German land and the German people must be punished by death.

The German Reich is to be built upon these foundations.

But the details of its development will be decided by the leaders and fighters of the German Freedom Movement.

But this Reich will only be of lasting value if it is supported and protected by a strong armed force, founded on the defensive capability of the German people, for whom compulsory military service has become the right of a free man.

Through our union in a patriotic struggle, may that which fills us all with ardent longing become reality: a united people under the black-white-red flag in a free German Reich, "united and mighty in arms outwardly, yet rich and diverse inwardly."

Nuremberg, on "German Day," 1/2.

September 1923.

Bavarian Combat Community: Federation of the Upper Lands, Imperial Flag, signed

Dr.

Weber.

Signed

Heiß.

Storm Division of the N.

S.

D.

A.

P.

Signed

Adolf Hitler.

Hitler’s constant demand that it was the duty of the combat leagues to think and act politically had thus taken clear shape. 13 Nöhm, The History of a High-Ranking Official 193 A major step forward had been taken.

Building on this, I subsequently tried to persuade Weber and Heiß to transfer the political leadership of the Kampfbund to Hitler.

It was clear to me that nothing could be achieved without unified leadership.

In my view, in order to make the Kampfbund combat-ready at all, Kriebel and Hitler now had to hold dictatorial leadership in their hands.

I saw this alone as the prerequisite for the Kampfbund’s deployment, if one was seriously determined to do so.

For I was under no illusions about the shortcomings that “clung” to it.

I assessed them as follows: First, the S.

A.

Hitler: The combat value of this organization was—from a purely military standpoint—limited.

Undoubtedly, there were many well-trained hundred-man units that were devoted to the cause and, above all, to Hitler himself with enthusiasm and the best of intentions.

Their training, however, was naturally difficult: they could not claim full military value.

They would not have been readily able to cope with a trained opponent.

Moreover, it could not be overlooked that, alongside veteran soldiers and front-line fighters, there were untrained young people in their ranks who were not fully deployable in serious combat.

The numerically strongest alliance could therefore not be fully counted on as a military force in all respects.

The Oberland was far better trained.

This alliance had the largest proportion of experienced soldiers, who had already proven themselves in the field, in the Nuremberg region, or in Upper Silesia.

Their military training and education had also been promoted with great care.

The third unit, the Reichsflagge, was on par with the Oberland in terms of combat effectiveness.

However, I harbored well-founded doubts as to whether the bulk of the rural local groups were willing and able to undertake a mission that went beyond the protection of home and farm.

For any military deployment, therefore, only a portion of the Reichsflagge—primarily the groups in Nuremberg and Munich—could be mobilized.

Upon sober and clear consideration, therefore, the combat value of the German Combat League should not be overestimated.

As a supplement for police purposes, which was the original purpose of the associations, the Kampfbund groups could be counted on to provide about 75% of the necessary manpower.

We had at our disposal about 40–50% of the total membership of the League consisting of forces that were suitable and ready for any assignment without the support of government troops, the Reichswehr, and the police.

Furthermore, however, it had to be considered: This situation did not improve with the passage of time, but rather worsened.

Time was working against us.

The veteran soldiers in the units gradually left in greater and greater numbers; the young recruits could not receive the training and instruction that would have been necessary.

But one cannot fight on enthusiasm alone.

And even that cannot be bottled; it naturally wanes over time and eventually gives way to a certain rigidity and indifference.

It was no different with the forces in which the Kampfbund saw its comrades-in-arms.

The Reichswehr and the state police increasingly resigned themselves to the facts on the ground; the officers as well.

Not only for economic reasons; their lack of political education, their apolitical attitude—of which they are still proud—prevents them from recognizing political necessities that go beyond the empty rhetoric of their morning newspaper.

The end result will be clear: the Reichswehr and the state police will fulfill their military duty toward any government; hence, if ordered, against us as well.

We certainly could not count on any other support.

The situation for the Kampfbund thus demanded the strict mobilization of all forces in order to raise and consolidate its internal and external combat effectiveness as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile, the general political situation also changed decisively.

Cuno resigned; Stresemann, as the new Reich Chancellor, announced the cessation of passive resistance in the Ruhr region and thus submission to France.

Everything that we nationalists had feared and predicted from the very beginning had come to pass.

After months of a costly struggle, which a weak government had led to the bitter end with inadequate resources and without the resolve to see it through to the end, the resistance was unconditionally abandoned.

When Hitler, at the beginning of the Ruhr struggle, refused to worship Cuno as a national hero in advance, he was denounced by the *Münchener Post* as a “destroyer of national unity.”

It was the very same Social Democrats who, in their blind patriotic enthusiasm, had been unable to speak a word, who now dealt the death blow to the national resistance.

It is always the same power play at work in the flight from reality: The petty bourgeois sees the highest political wisdom in “enlisting the Social Democrats to cooperate.”

By doing so, he hopes to win the support of the working class.

The Marxist leader gladly takes the hand extended to him.

From time to time, it seems useful to him to provide an outlet for the patriotic sentiment rooted in the German worker no less than in every German compatriot.

In this way, he is able to proclaim his “national” stance to the whole world and does not run the risk of losing leadership over the masses when the nationalistic and instinctive impulses cast a spell over them.

Then, of course, his real task begins: to lull this instinct to sleep with “realpolitik” wisdom and slowly kill it off.

This art of the Marxist leaders has never failed thus far; they have always succeeded in stifling every national movement that the bourgeois philistine had “won” for himself.

Cuno was able to extend his hand to Betmann-Hollweg, who was kindred in spirit: he followed the same path as the latter and ended up at the same destination.

In both cases, of course, it was the German people who had to pay the price.

The same pattern repeats itself through the ages: At the end of 1918, when the Entente was on the verge of collapse, the German government lost its nerve; in September 1923, when the French were considering abandoning the Ruhr enterprise, the newly appointed managing director of the firm “Germany,” Gustav Strefemann, “liquidated” the “Ruhr adventure.”

In a memorandum on the Franco-Belgian railway administration, its director Brand writes: “We fought with the courage of despair.

Until shortly before the cessation of passive resistance, in the face of the terrible difficulties, the thought repeatedly arose of abandoning the Ruhr enterprise altogether.” “The victor is he who has the strongest nerves,” a great man once said during the World War; fate seems to deny the German people leaders with strong nerves in their decisive hours.

The surrender of the fighters in the Ruhr region triggered long-suppressed tensions throughout the Reich; a mood of crisis prevailed; “events” were expected in Berlin.

The leaders of the German Combat League met on September 25, 1923, to assess the situation.

Present were: Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, Hitler, Heiß, Weber, Göring, Seypdel, and I.

In a magnificent two-and-a-half-hour speech, Hitler painted a gripping picture of the political situation and, in conclusion, asked the leaders present to entrust him with overall political leadership.

Acting on an inner compulsion, with tears in his eyes, Heiß extended his hand to him and pledged his allegiance to his political leadership.

No less moved by the significance of the moment, Weber followed his example.

Tears welled up in my eyes as well when, overcome by inner excitement, I saw taking shape what I had longed for so long.

Now I truly believed that the hour of liberation had drawn nearer and that the conditions for the redeeming act had finally been met.

Deeply moved by this event, I now made the final decision to renounce active military service and devote all my strength to the cause from which I hoped for the salvation of my fatherland.

The next morning, I submitted my resignation once again.

Hitler's appointment as political leader of the Kampfbund, which was soon made public, struck both friend and foe like a storm signal.

Everyone was aware that with this, the Kampfbund had taken a step that strengthened and consolidated it internally, and outwardly announced its decision to actively intervene in the further shaping of destiny.

The public announcement read: "In view of the gravity of the political situation, we feel the necessity of unified political leadership.

In full agreement regarding the path and goal, we, the leaders of the Kampfbund, while fully preserving its internal unity, entrust this political leadership to Mr. Adolf Hitler." The counterattack against the Kampfbund's proclamation came immediately.

The Bavarian state government took precautions and acted.

On September 26, 1923, it appointed District President Dr.

Von Kahr as General State Commissioner of Bavaria with special powers.

But we were fully aware of the significance and implications of this measure.

In the person of Mr. von Kahr, the Kampfbund was to be confronted with the man who, perhaps because of his name alone, was still in a position to hold down the political upper hand that the Kampfbund was preparing to gain.

When I met with Dr.

Von Scheubner-Richter, who served as an advisor to the Kampfbund on certain political matters, I met with Pöhner and Hitler; the unanimous conviction was that Kahr's appointment amounted to a declaration of war against us.

Hitler, in particular, instinctively recognized the danger and would have been prepared to go to extremes.

I, too, was well aware of what was at stake.

However, as the military representative of the Kampfbund, I could only advise, in view of our actual means of power at the time, to put on a brave face.

Within the League, all forces now had to be strained to the utmost to increase our effectiveness; all leaders had to give the very last of what they could.

Propaganda had to be ramped up to the highest level, and all followers, half-hearted members, and lukewarm individuals had to be ruthlessly removed from the movement.

Hitler ordered that all party members must resign from organizations that did not belong to the

Kampfbund.

In 14 mass rallies on September 27,

he intended to comment on the political situation.

The rallies were banned.

In the Reich, to quell the fury of the betrayed people, executive power was transferred to the Minister of the Reichswehr.

Thus, executive power in Bavaria passed to the Reichswehr commander, Lieutenant General von Lossow.

Since Bavaria, for its part, had appointed Kahr as General State Commissioner, von Lossow voluntarily placed himself under his command; which, however, violated the constitution.

The very next few days brought upheavals and showed just how right our fears regarding the appointment of Mr. von Kahr had been.

The State Commissioner first issued several decrees to throw the nationalists a few crumbs.

Decrees on beer, grain, and tobacco, as well as six orders regarding rent setting, were presented to the attentive public.

A ban on public gatherings was issued; high treason was to be punished by death, and preventive detention was to be carried out under certain conditions in the workhouse.

The decrees bear a curious resemblance to certain writings that had previously lain dormant in the drawer of the leader of a Bavarian revivalist organization.

The “dictator’s” decrees mostly remained on paper and, like the famous “expulsion of the Eastern Jews,” were never actually carried out; but their purpose was nonetheless achieved; the “patriots” admired the strong hand of the energetic State Commissioner.

The “United Front” members sensed a change in the air: even those parts that had remained hard amid the general slime were now bound to soften as well.

The “national” press, whose overall direction had been taken over by Mr. Schiedt, the editor-in-chief of the “Münchner Zeitung,” could not praise Mr. von Kahr’s sweeping actions highly enough.

It was unheard of that the ill-mannered Adolf Hitler refused to see reason and declined to kowtow to the State Commissioner.

The “patriotic leaders” did indeed implore the young National Socialist outsider to be well-behaved and join in the hallelujahs.

Understandably, the wicked Adolf could not be persuaded to do so.

Pöhner, Kriebel, Heiß, Weber, and I also shared his stance.

We had all followed Kahr's work up to that point and wanted to see action first and foremost.

Now it was not a matter of paperwork, but of moving people.

But all previous measures bore the stamp of half-measures.

Kahr was the man of eternal preparation; the action that was to defuse the tension could not be expected from him alone.

The German Combat League addressed the following letter to the State Commissioner: "In response to Your Excellency's request for a statement from the German Combat League regarding E.

E.

I have the honor, as political leader of the German Combat League, to inform you of the following: The German Combat League's statement on the major issues of the day was published in a fine proclamation dated September 1/2

from Nuremberg.

Our position regarding the General State Commissioner depends on the stance that the General State Commissioner himself takes toward it.

We note that the appointment of the General State Commissioner took place without prior consultation with the German Kampfbund." This last statement was intended to point out that, prior to Kahr's appointment, some national association and local chapter boards had indeed been informed of the intended move, but not representatives of the Kampfbund. In 1985, King Rupprecht called upon the officers of the Old Royal Army to pledge allegiance to the General State Commissioner.

On behalf of the officers of the Kampfbund, First Lieutenant Kriebel therefore explained our wait-and-see stance toward Kahr in a letter to the "National Association of German Officers."

Even discussions between His Majesty the King and Pöhner, as well as between Hitler and Colonel von Seisser, failed to change the Kampfbund's position.

On September 27,

Heiss appointed me as his deputy in the leadership of the Reichsflagge and sent me to Nuremberg to inform the local leaders and the association.

The situation I found there was not encouraging.

Kötter, the representative of the German Nationalists, who possessed a fiery oratory, had already aligned the Nuremberg Reichsflagge with Kahr in the spirit of his party.

Their leader stood by him unconditionally.

I was unable to convince all the leaders of the Kampfbund's exclusion, so that in the plenary session I limited myself to addressing a few inconsequential words to the assembled Reichsflagge.

Hei, who arrived in Nuremberg from Munich the following day, traveled with me on September 30

to the German Day in Bayreuth, in which Hitler also participated.

Heiss's position was already wavering, but I believed that he was still determined to remain loyal to the flag of the Kampfbund.

In a conversation with Hitler, he asked him, in any case, to speak to the Reich Flag on the occasion of the upcoming gathering.

Still on the night of October 1,

Kötter issued an ultimatum to Captain Heiß demanding a policy that ran counter to the guidelines of the Kampfbund.

The result of the dispute was an order from the Reichsflagge leadership to the district groups—which I, too, was forced to agree to—in which the General State Commissioner was expressly granted support for his policy to the extent that the principles of the Kampfbund were not compromised.

I drove back to Munich with concern, fearing the worst for Heiß and the Reichsflagge due to the influence of Kötter's circle.

Indeed, a few days later, Mr. Bolten arrived in Munich as Captain Heiß's envoy to the Reichsflagge leadership to advocate for a change of course by the Kampfbund.

Bolten, however, seemed to be convinced of the correctness of our position, if perhaps only temporarily.

In any case, on October 4, Captain Heiß

To declare at night that the Reich flag still stands on the ground of the Kampfbund's call of September 29,

, is an inseparable part of the Kampfbund, and has no intention of separating from it.

On October 6

And 7 October

The Reichsflagge conference took place in Nuremberg.

Hitler had traveled to Nuremberg with Kriebel, Göring, Brückner, Weiß, and me 199 to accept Heiß's invitation to speak before the Reichsflagge.

Heiss, however, withdrew the invitation and rejected Hitler's wish to speak.

Heiss also rejected my categorical demand to speak as the political leader of the Kampfbund.

I again urged Heiß before the assembly to let Hitler speak.

In vain.

Heiss was now determined to break with Hitler.

He had chosen Kahr.

I do not know the reasons that ultimately led him to do so; however, they were not based solely on the opinions of influential subordinate leaders. A discussion in Munich had been decisive for his change of heart.

When Heiß opened the meeting of the Reichsflagge on October 7,

opened the meeting of the Reichsflagge, he emphasized in his opening speech that he would stand behind Kahr as long as the latter continued on the path he had taken so far. “We are bound to Kahr for better or for worse,” were the weighty words he calmly uttered.

The enumeration of the “deeds” initiated and still intended by von Kahr aroused great jubilation in the entirely uncritical assembly, which presented a characteristic “mass spectacle” and allowed itself to be carried away by slogans.

I realized that I had no further business in this circle.

On Hitler’s orders, I read out his statement that he was relinquishing political leadership of the combat units.

When Heiß demanded the confidence of his subordinates, I refused to grant it to him.

The leaders of the local groups in Augsburg, Memmingen, and Schleißheim joined me.

Heiß then declared these groups and the Munich local group dissolved.

The Kampfbund had survived in its original composition for only a few days.

It would have become the power factor whose words would have had to be heard on German issues.

The moment it entered the political arena, it was already at the center of the struggle.

And already one of its leaders had defected.

I was at a complete loss to understand Captain Heiss’s defection.

I knew that forces were at work to draw him into our ranks, but I did not consider it conceivable that Heiß would succumb to them.

We certainly had to reckon with Captain Heiß’s departure in those days: The Reich had issued an arrest

warrant against him for some allegedly inflammatory speech; the Bavarian state authorities would hardly have hesitated to lend a hand in the arrest of the struggle leader Heiß.

Only his commendable surrender in 200 ensured him Bavaria's protection from his pursuers, from whom he had previously escaped by fleeing to Central Germany.

The Bavarian government's move had yielded an unexpected success for them.

With the defection of the Reichsflagge and its leader to Kahr's camp, the Kampfbund had undoubtedly suffered a numerical and moral weakening.

Yet this could not for a moment dissuade me from the path I recognized as correct; on the contrary, I was determined to hold fast to it all the more. "Freedom and the Kingdom of Heaven are not won by half-measures!" 25.

Reichskriegsflagge.

On October 7,

by Captain Heiß, I immediately consolidated the local groups of the Reichsflagge under my leadership as the "Reichskriegsflagge."

The entire Reichsflagge of Southern Bavaria to date placed itself under my command.

As early as October 11,

the Reichskriegsflagge of Augsburg had been established.

Its staunch leader, Kün, placed his entire unit at my disposal that evening.

Together with Hermann Esser, I visited N.

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Augsburg.

In Memmingen, the energetic, genuinely German-minded farmer, and in Schleißheim, my faithful gardener, led well-trained, reliable units.

On October 12,

The former Reichsflagge München held its founding assembly as the "Reichskriegsflagge."

The once small Reichsflagge München had meanwhile developed into a strong, well-structured unit and numbered over 300 men.

Through the most careful selection and strict military discipline and training, I had built a powerful and well-disciplined unit that stood by me unconditionally.

It was just like in the unforgettable days when I led my company in the field: one for all and all for one.

Just as I cared for each individual and made their fate and lot my own, so too did I know that I could count on every single one of them in any situation.

These magnificent men came from all walks of life: alongside the merchant stood the student and the worker; alongside the veteran officer of the Royal Army stood the young Reichswehr soldier in formation.

The association's gatherings were duty.

There was no joking here; in soldierly subordination, the soldier of the Reich War Flag, whether officer or man, obeyed the leader appointed by me.

The s.

A.

was under the command of the tireless Lieutenant OB Wald, who had the unit firmly in his grasp, was on the move day and night, and remained loyal to it—just as it remained loyal to him—through hardship and death.

The recruit unit had in Löscher a capable leader who was particularly skilled in the education and training of the young recruits.

The eternally young Nittmeister Baron von Thüngen, cheerful, steadfast, and unshakable, led the main unit, which consisted primarily of officers and older members of the unit.

The Lembert Battery, which had emerged from the "Oberland," had a reliable and brave group of loyal comrades-in-arms.

I also think with pride of the Palatia Corps' company, which stood firmly in my ranks and was a model of the fulfillment of a soldier's duty and loyal comradeship.

The intelligent and steadfast Refe≠ rendar Binz earned my special affection; the young Dr.

Schramm was often a valuable support to me in many legal matters; Robert Lippert also belonged to the association during his time as a student in Munich.

I cannot list here all the names that would be worthy of mention, nor can I highlight the association's achievements in detail.

However, I do not believe that there was a more cohesive volunteer association, or one superior in spirit

and education.

Due to a lack of respect for the new colors of the Reich, e.

e.g.,

at Bahnhofplatz and at the Social Welfare Office on Barer Straße, members of the association had to answer to the Republic's judge. Even otherwise, things did not go without skirmishes, which internally strengthened and welded the association together.

On German Day in Nuremberg, the association stood out for its exemplary discipline.

At the founding ceremony for the Reich War Flag, I emphasized that the New Association would remain, in every respect, a firm member of the German Combat League. A special service regulation for the R.

K.

F.

regulated the entire service life of the unit. "The Reichskriegsflagge aims to rally the battle-hardened front-line fighters of the victorious years 1914–18 and the battle-ready youth around the black-white-red banner and forge them into cohesive units.

The era of club-like activities is over; today the task is to form militarily deployable units that will answer the call to arms." Thus the regulation first defined the mission of the R.

K.

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And added: "The R.

K.

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recognizes no privilege of birth, rank,

social status, or wealth.

All men of German blood who are willing to commit themselves unreservedly to our goals may stand in its ranks." Almost daily appeals reinforced the members' readiness for service. Training and drills were conducted with great intensity.

Everyone was waiting for the day.

On October 17,

October, I once again attempted to explain the aspirations of the Kampfbund to His Majesty the King.

The King, however, approved of Captain Heiß's conduct and endorsed the measures taken by Kahr, who could call himself a fine governor.

He would have liked to see the Kampfbund also decide in favor of Kahr.

As already indicated, I believe that his opinion was not without influence on Captain Heiß's decision.

Dr.

Weber, in contrast to Heiß, had remained loyal to the Oberland and, on September 14,

At a leaders' meeting where Hitler took the floor, he pledged himself to a loyal fighting alliance.

At the same place, in Nuremberg, the leaders of the N.

S.

D.

A.

P.

had gathered and pledged their allegiance to their supreme leader.

The German University Ring, an organization uniting over one hundred thousand students from across the entire German-speaking world, also declared its support in a rally for the

.

On October 19

October, a welcome celebration was held at the Löwenbräukeller for First Lieutenant Roßbach, who had been released from eight months of imprisonment in Leipzig.

To the strains of the flag song, the Reich War Flag, greeted with enthusiasm, was carried into the packed hall.

Rößbach and Göring delivered rousing speeches.

After the celebration, I watched the march-past of the R.

K.

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Ab.

A few days later, I visited my comrades Oßwald, Brey, and Krupp von Bohlen-Halbach in the hospital in Landsberg (Lech), who, on their way to a recruitment day for the R.

K.

F.

had been seriously injured in a motorcycle accident in Memmingen.

Captain Seydel had been in Berlin shortly before on behalf of the Kampfbund for discussions, where the North German Kampfverbände had resumed their attempt to unite in a manner similar to that in Munich.

His Excellency von Below now assumed supreme command of the associations there.

On October 18,

Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, on behalf of the Kampfbund, laid a wreath at the tomb of King Ludwig II in the Frauenkirche

and attended the memorial service in the Theatinerhofkirche together with officers of the combat associations. 26.

Signs of a storm.

Autumn had arrived in Germany.

The people’s hardship grew ever greater.

The looming specter of unemployment, hunger, and destitution loomed as winter approached.

Bitterness and agitation grew day by day among all segments of the population.

Everyone felt that the pent-up tension would one day have to be released. 203 The Reich government faced difficult decisions.

The Rhenish Republic had been proclaimed in Aachen, and in Saxony, under the Marxist-Communist Prime Minister Zeigner, the Bolsheviks had established a platform. To restore constitutional order, the Reich dispatched the Württemberg Imperial Army under the command of Lieutenant General von Müller to Saxony and Thuringia.

The Bavarian government severed diplomatic relations with Saxony.

A border guard was established on the North Prussian border, with Captain Ehrhardt placed in command.

The purpose of this measure could be none other than to cover the advance for the fight against Berlin.

For mere defense against any expected Red advances against Northern Bavaria, the Bavarian police forces would have been fully sufficient; the mobilization of special, armed units—the declaration of a "state of imminent danger of war"—was entirely unnecessary.

The Bavarian General State Commissioner Dr.

Von Kahr opposed the supreme authority of the Reich in almost all areas.

He suspended the Republic Protection Act for Bavaria and prohibited the execution of arrest warrants, such as those against Captain Ehrhardt, Captain Heiß, and First Lieutenant Roßbach.

The Reich's judicial authority was thus eliminated for Bavaria.

The following incident led to Bavaria's complete break with the Reich: The "Völkische Beobachter" had attacked Gessler and Seeckt in a written statement, whereupon Berlin ordered a ban on this newspaper through General von Lossow, who, on behalf of the Reich, held executive authority in Bavaria.

Since Kahr refused to enforce the ban and von Lossow declared himself unable to do so, the publication of the paper was to be prevented by force.

When General von Lossow refused to do so, he was dismissed by the Reich government.

Dr.

Gehler went to Augsburg, summoned Major General Baron von Kreß there—whom he had intended to appoint as von Lossow's successor—and entrusted him with the command of the 7th (Bavarian) Division.

The Bavarian government responded to this measure by calling upon the Bavarian contingent of the Imperial Army, as "trustee of the German people," to appoint Lieutenant General von Lossow as commander of the state and to entrust him with the command of the 7th

Division.

The Bavarian Reichswehr was thus removed from the supreme command of the Reich and placed exclusively under the authority of the General State Commissioner.

It may seem strange that we nationalists did not enthusiastically approve of Rab's measures, which abolished the legal authority and military supreme command of Reich President Ebert.

After all, they were entirely in line with our frequently stated demands.

On the one hand, this spared the champions of our cause from the wrath of the State Court in defense of the Republic; on the other hand, the immediate cause was Kahr's appointment to the central organ of the National Socialist Party.

Undoubtedly, we nationalists could have welcomed and approved of this break if we had been convinced that Kahr would now unfurl the black-white-red flag in Bavaria and call out to the national-

minded people of all German districts: “Germany is in our camp!”

Yet for the Kampfbund, German action alone was the yardstick for its stance.

Kahr certainly attempted to strike a German note in his fine appeal.

At the same time, however, the General Ministry published an appeal “To the Bavarian People,” which placed exclusively Bavarian interests in the foreground.

Blessings could then spring from this act for all of Germany if the struggle was solely for its welfare and this goal alone was the guiding principle of action.

If the Bavarian government truly became the “trustee of the German people” not only in word but in deed. (The term “trustee” was the prevailing model at the time.) If this was not the case, then the measure amounted to a reprehensible military mutiny.

This was all the more so because Prussian officers and soldiers at General von Lossow’s Infantry School were also urged to refuse obedience to the supreme commander of the Reichswehr.

I could not bring myself to believe that the Bavarian government was guided exclusively by German interests when it committed the Reichswehr to Bavaria; therefore, I personally rejected and opposed this commitment.

There is, however, little basis for the assumption that it was General von Lossow’s intention to make himself the champion of Bavarian special interests.

In any case, I do not believe it.

But this act proved to be the general’s undoing.

His immediate subordinates, the commanders of the infantry and the artillery, were opposed to his move.

They were joined by the Chief of Staff appointed by the Reichswehr Ministry—whom General von Lossow did not recognize—and the Prussian General Staff Officer whom Berlin had sent to Munich to replace me.

It was this same circle of officers that then, on November 8, 1923, stepped onto the scene and forced him to submit.

Berlin, as always, could wait here as well.

In the end, it prevailed after all.

On September 22,

General Adolf Hitler granted a lengthy discussion, from which Hitler departed very satisfied.

General von Lossow stated on this occasion that he was in complete agreement with Hitler’s position

on nine out of ten points. 205 There was no doubt about von Lossow's willingness to participate in the Nationalist Uprising.

We also held his determination and his great abilities in high regard.

However, even Kahr's subsequent measures failed to dispel the Kampfbund's concerns.

He prevented the transport of the Reich's gold reserves in Nuremberg and the transfer of Reich taxes from the tax offices to Berlin.

With regard to the Bavarian Transport Authority, he ensured that his orders took precedence over those of the Reich Transport Authority.

This also stripped the Reich of its financial and transportation sovereignty.

In contrast to the Bavarian government, Kahr announced that he would not agree to an amicable settlement of the Seeckt-Lossow dispute; he left unanswered the Reich government's demand of October 27, 1923, to lift the Bavarian state of emergency.

But all of Kahr's decrees, of course, remained merely on paper.

Externally, he declared his intention to resolve the "German Question" and assured the leaders of the Patriotic Associations that he was determined to march on Berlin.

The associations were urged to stand ready; things could "get underway" any day.

The routes for the advance had already been determined.

In the Volunteer Corps, tactical exercises were held using a map of Berlin.

Well-known leaders of the Patriotic Movement who were particularly close to Mr. von Kahr (Captain Helß, Professor Bauer, Baron von Aufseß) delivered impassioned speeches against Berlin. "Bavarian fists must clean up the mess in Berlin," "Kahr is sitting with the fuse on the powder keg," are just two examples from the bouquet of those exercises.

In an effort to win over the Kampsbund—which, despite everything, had remained on the sidelines—to his noble goals, Kahr initiated a discussion with Colonel Pöhner of the State Court on September 30, 1923.

He offered him the position of civil governor for Saxony and Thuringia, adding that the task could take months or even years.

Colonel von Seisser, who had been tasked by von Kahr with discussing the details of this mission with Pöhner, stated that troops from the Kampfbund were out of the question for the occupation of Thuringia, as they would have to march beyond Thuringia.

Seisser explained to his officers that an emergency police force would be established so that the state police would be free to carry out operations outside the region.

However, regarding the stance of the state police, Lossow, and Kahr toward the Kampfbund, Seisser noted that there was complete agreement on all points, except for the timing, on which agreement with Hütter had not yet been reached.

Members of the State Police were offered membership in the N.

S.

D.

A.

P.

Wlederholt.

Even within the Reichswehr, the general consensus among the troops was that the march on Berlin was imminent.

On October 31,

the Military District Command convened the leaders of the Völkisch and Valerländisch associations for a fundamental discussion, in which representatives of the Kampfbund also participated.

Guidelines for joint preparatory work were established at this meeting.

On November 6, 1923, Losso declared himself determined to carry out a coup d’état.

The General State Commissioner added that two paths—a normal one and an abnormal one—could lead to this.

Kahr concluded his remarks: “I will determine the timing; I will not let it be imposed on me.

I will intervene against any premature action.” The nationalist organizations prepared to march.

Hitler explained to his increasingly restless followers that he was working with Lossow and Seisser and would not undertake anything without their consent.

On October 26

and 27 October

I held roll calls for the R.

K.

F.

Munich; on October 30

I enlisted the R.

K.

F.

Augsburg, on November 2

The R.

K.

F.

Munich at the Pioneers' Drill Hall.

At a mass rally on October 30.

At the Krone Circus, Hitler declared to thunderous applause from the masses: "For me, the German question will not be resolved until the black-white-red swastika flag flies from the Berlin Palace.

There is no turning back, only forward!

We all feel that the hour has come, and therefore we will not shirk its call, but, like the soldier in the field, will follow the command: Stand firm, German people, and forward, march!" Negotiations that Kahr initiated with North German circles for the purpose of establishing a national dictatorship gave the Kampfbund cause to redefine its position toward the General State Commissioner on a new basis.

In addition, after Kahr had declared that he would not negotiate with the Reich government, Berlin had initiated negotiations with representatives of the Bavarian People's Party.

A not insignificant portion of the party was prepared to come to terms with Berlin and sacrifice Lossow as the price.

This is hardly surprising; for a "dictatorship" of Kahr's was the B.

V.

P.

was desirable only insofar as it curbed the influence of the Völkische.

This situation suggested to the Kampfbund a rapprochement, even with Kahr.

In several discussions with Lossow and Seisser, common paths and goals had already been established.

In early November, the two declared that something had to happen now and that they could wait no longer.

Seisser wanted to obtain further information in person in Berlin; Lossow agreed to participate in any coup that had a 51% probability of success.

Hitler gave us the impression, based on our discussions, that Los≠ fow and Seisser were expecting a fait accompli, but did not want to take the plunge themselves; rather, they wanted him to do so.

In November, a “coup” was on the horizon almost every day.

When our people took to the streets in storm gear, they were asked when things would actually “get underway.” 207 Political tension reached a level that could no longer be surpassed.

The economic situation was also spiraling out of control.

The numerical madness of money reached dizzying heights.

For example, as early as October 21, 1923, a simple lunch cost 1 billion marks.

With feverish longing, everyone awaited the day that, along with freedom, would surely bring economic recovery.

On November 4

was Remembrance Day and the laying of the foundation stone for the War Memorial.

The Reichswehr, the state police, and military associations stood in front of the Army Museum. 5 A faint tremor ran through all the ranks, like a premonition of a great decision.

Kahr and Geifer were absent.

Kahr was waiting to hear what news Seisser, whom he had sent to Berlin, would bring back.

The state police car sent to pick up General Ludendorff strangely broke down.

Thus, Ludendorff could not attend.

After the ceremony, all active and volunteer troops gathered on Marstallstraße.

The king stood in front of his father’s residence and reviewed the march past at the Marstall; beside him were General von Lossow and a host of generals and officers.

Troop after troop, flag after flag marched past, black, white, and red, and the swastika fluttered proudly in the wind.

The R.

K.

F.

marched past the Prince of Bavaria: Was this the moment we had longed for? Should we not take the king into our midst and call out to him: Fate has imposed upon you the duty to be the leader in our struggle.

Be our Duke and lead us!

We will not rest until Germany is free and happy again.

Such and similar thoughts moved us officers, and above all our military leader, First Lieutenant Kriebel, who presented the battle alliance to the King.

A significant portion of these young fighters, who marched past the rather modest King of Bavaria here in the streets with enthusiasm, belonged to the working class.

Numerous former communists also stood in our ranks!

Once again, a historic moment was drawing to a close.

But nothing happened.

Troops and units marched back to their quarters to the sound of music.

The combat units marched past their leaders, Kriebel and Hitler, in front of the building of the General State Commissioner, in a stiff drill step.

The singing of the battle songs slowly faded away; the feverish excitement gradually subsided, giving way to the burning desire for the final solution.

Hours and days passed again; every morning the freedom fighters heard the ever more urgent question: Will today finally bring the decision?

The sub-leaders of the combat units pressed for decisive action; battle-ready regional leaders declared they could no longer hold their men back and would strike on their own if there was any further hesitation.

The time had come; a hesitant leader could cause incalculable harm.

The leaders sat together in consultation late into the night; the training and equipping of the combat-ready assault troops were perfected down to the last detail.

Every evening was filled with roll calls and drills.

November 8,

November 1923 had passed; the five years of rule that the 1918 revolution had brought upon the German people were complete.

The first snowflakes of the year drifted down on Munich. 27.

The 8th

And 9

November 1923.

For the evening of November 8, 1923, Privy Councilor Zentz had sent out invitations to a number of professional associations and patriotic organizations to the Bürgerbräukeller, where Mr. von Kahr intended to read a programmatic speech on his politics.

Whether this speech, like most of the other speeches that earned Mr. von Kahr a reputation as a statesman—as the "Völkischer Beobachter" once so aptly put it—was also written by State Councilor Schmelzle, I do not know.

The Bürgerbräukeller had been chosen as Munich's largest hall; nevertheless, it could not accommodate the vast crowds of listeners.

The events of that memorable evening are too well known and historically established; I shall therefore spare myself a detailed account of them.

At 8:45 p.m., Hitler proclaimed the National Republic.

An hour-long discussion then took place in an adjoining room between Hitler, Kahr, Pöhner, Lossow, and Seisser, to which General Ludendorff was also brought by car.

During this time, the members of the Bavarian state government present in the hall, led by Minister President Dr.

Von Knilling, were placed under protective custody.

At 9:45 p.m., amid thunderous cheers, Kahr declared before the assembly his intention to assume control of Bavaria's destiny as governor of the monarchy.

Hitler then announced the formation of the Provisional German National Government and the New Bavarian Government.

In a solemn and emotional statement, General Ludendorff placed himself at the disposal of the German National Government by virtue of his own authority.

General von Lossow and Colonel von Seisser pledged to reorganize the army and police under the black-white-red flag.

Finally, President Pöhner declared his willingness to assume the office of Bavarian Minister-President.

All the statements were received with unbridled jubilation.

Kahr grasped Hitler's hand with both of his, shook it long and vigorously, and looked into his eyes with emotion. 14 Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 209 When the New Men had withdrawn to the

conference room again after the main rallies, Kahr discussed with Pöhner the necessity of immediately appointing a new police president.

On the night of the 11th, Kahr announced that he had informed the authorities of the new situation via radio message and instructed Pöhner to notify the press.

General von Lossow had approached General Ludendorff, stood at attention, and reported: “Your Excellency’s wish is my command; I will organize the army as Your Excellency needs it to fight.” Colonel von Geifer expressed himself in a similar vein.

While these events were unfolding in the Bürgerbräukeller, the R.

K.

F.

had gathered for a comradely evening at the Löwenbräukeller.

National Socialist storm troops under the command of First Lieutenant Brückner, regional associations, and the Kampsbund München under their fine leader Zeller had accepted the invitation of the R.

K.

F.

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In addition, numerous friends of the German Kampfbund had come with their families, so that the hall was completely filled.

From the very beginning, the atmosphere was one of joyful excitement.

I gave the following short speech, as recorded by a stenographer: “Comrades and friends of the German Combat League!

As leader of the R.

K.

F.

I warmly welcome you all to our comradely evening, to which we have invited you today on the anniversary of the November Uprising.

This evening is intended to stand out from the framework of an ordinary comradeship evening.

At a time when our people—and especially the best of our forces—are living in the bitterest distress after five years of an ill-fated revolutionary period, it can no longer be a matter of fostering conviviality and comfort.

Today, on the fifth anniversary of the revolution, we call upon you all to stand in solidarity, to fight, and to seek vengeance and retribution against the traitors and destroyers of the people.

The German Combat League is not willing to continue watching the downfall of our fatherland idly.

It does not fight for its own sake; we all want nothing for ourselves—no privileges, no well-paid positions; but we are convinced that the great hardship can only be alleviated through struggle.

We must be ready and willing to take up arms for the freedom and salvation of our fatherland, to devote our entire being and our lives to the fatherland.

“Onward, into the struggle for the liberation of the Fatherland in loyal comradeship with all who are willing to fight—that shall be the slogan of the evening of November 8th!”

“My words met with enthusiastic response.

A call to battle still elicited joyful approval back then. — It may well be good to remember this in a time when apathy has taken the place of a fighting spirit.

After me, Hermann 210, representing the political leader Hitler, took the floor with great enthusiasm.

I thanked him especially for coming.

For I knew that he had been confined to bed for days with a high fever, to which he had to return immediately after his speech.

During his speech, I received news of the events at the Bürgerbräukeller.

The announcement sparked endless jubilation.

People jumped up from their chairs and embraced one another; many wept with joy and emotion.

The Reichswehr soldiers tore the yellow cockades from their caps.

The general enthusiasm was so loud that the music could barely be heard in the hall.

At last!

That was the word of relief that burst from everyone’s lips.

With difficulty, I managed to make myself heard and give the orders for the combat troops to march out.

I then immediately formed the units in front of the Löwenbräukeller to march to the Bürgerbräukeller to pay homage to the new government.

Surrounded by enthusiasm and cheering from the street and the windows, we marched, led by the band, through Briennerstraße into the inner city.

I still remember a sinister-looking man with a black beard and a grim expression who suddenly marched up beside me and warned me to be careful.

I shoved him aside and he disappeared into the crowd.

On Brienner Street, a motorcyclist delivered an order to me to report to the War Ministry and meet there with R.

K.

F.

of the new government.

N.

S.

D.

A.

P.

And Oberland marched on to the Bürgerbräukeller.

I took over with the R.

K.

F., joined by the Zeller Combat League, occupied the War Ministry.

The Reichswehr guard tried to deny me entry; only with great difficulty were my companions Seydel and Oßwald, who were the first to enter the building with me, able to prevent them from using force.

The sentry on duty, in particular, behaved in an exemplary manner; he did not move a step from my side until the officer on duty sent him back to the guardhouse.

The officer on duty that evening was Captain Dafer.

His conduct was dignified.

I knew he didn’t belong here; he had never made a secret of it.

But I have always respected him because he was not one of those who merely earn their salary.

When I entered his room to explain my mission to him, he declared that he would step aside, yet at my request he continued to perform his official duties.

In particular, he undertook to seek contact with General von Lossow and to answer the troops' inquiries.

My attempts to report to General von Lossow were unsuccessful.

The R.

K.

F.

had immediately occupied the entire building of the War Ministry.

The headquarters unit (Baron von Thüngen), together with 1 · 211 of the Reichswehr, was to man the telephones and stand ready to serve the commander.

The Lembert Battery, together with the Reichswehr in equal numbers, took over guard and sentry duty.

The s.

A.

Under Oßwald and the Binz detachment were on special standby in the building, while the groups of the Zeller Combat League were stationed in the courtyard of the War Ministry.

In appearance and demeanor, the R.

K.

F.

was in no way inferior to a peacekeeping force.

Even the Reichswehr later had to pay tribute to their conduct in the courtroom.

No cabinet, no drawer was opened, no document was touched.

I had established command in the anteroom of the provincial commander; no one entered General von Lossow's room.

The impossibility of reaching General von Lossow severely hampered my actions.

I did not wish to issue any orders, either to the Reichswehr troops or to anyone else, without first having spoken to the general.

I was therefore unable to answer the many inquiries that were coming in from various units, especially from outside the area.

Every now and then word came that Lossow was on his way, then again that Seisser would be arriving; the Ossizler Company had already lined up to pay their respects to Seisser, but the alarm was in vain.

Around 11 a.m., Hitler arrived at the military district headquarters and greeted the N.

K.

F.

When I congratulated him on his success, he embraced me and said it was the finest day of his life; he was beaming with happiness and joy. “Now better times will come,” he said, “we all want to work day and night for the Great Goal, to save Germany from distress and disgrace.” Joyful and troubling news alternated.

Since I heard that General von Lossow had gone to the city command headquarters, and I could not get through by telephone, I went there accompanied by Captain Seydel to report to the new Minister of the Reichswehr.

The gate was locked; when I knocked, I was asked for my name and the purpose of my visit, but the gate was not opened for me.

This aroused my initial suspicion; but I soon reassured myself with the thought that an overzealous, uninformed guard was to blame.

General Ludendorff had meanwhile arrived at the military district headquarters, accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, and had established his command post there.

Hitler was also temporarily present; Pöhner had withdrawn to his apartment.

When Captain Seydel, late in the evening, expressed his concerns to General Ludendorff regarding General von Lossow’s prolonged absence, the general sharply rebuffed him: “A German general does not break his word!” Very soon after we had taken over the military district headquarters, the anteroom filled up: Officers and officials from the Military District Command and the Reichswehr arrived and reported for duty; officers of the Old Army appeared to inquire about the situation, offer their services, or—for suitable positions—put themselves on the list, naturally only for the “higher-ranking” ones.

Around 1 a.m., a company of the State Police marched past the Ministry of War building; the company and R.

K.

F.

exchanged enthusiastic greetings.

The entire Infantry School, as we heard, had marched through the city under the command of First Lieutenant Roßbach with swastika flags flying, every man wearing the swastika armband.

However, difficulties seemed to have arisen at the Engineer Barracks.

Captain von Müller’s Oberland Battalion had unpleasant altercations with officers of the Reichswehr’s Engineer Battalion.

General Aechter, the military leader of Oberland, was therefore tasked by the leader of the Kampfbund with restoring order there.

Hitler, too, undertook this task, which was actually quite foreign to him.

Gradually, the anteroom and the other rooms of the military district command became increasingly empty.

The situation did not seem clear enough to those seeking employment.

More and more rumors of difficulties surfaced, urging caution.

As the night drew to a close, the General Quartermaster of the World War was still awake in the commander’s office of the military district headquarters, surrounded by his loyal followers.

His expression was grave; no one could see what was going on in the field marshal’s mind.

No news had arrived from von Kahr, Lossow, and Seisser; all communication with them had been cut off.

In the hallways, however, and in the anterooms, German soldiers slept, N.

K.

F., Reichswehr, and a few state police officers, arm in arm, faithfully united, awaiting the dawning morning.

At the gate stood R.

K.

F.

and the Reichswehr stood guard together.

From time to time, I too lay down to rest, to let my nerves relax.

As dawn broke, with no clarity yet regarding the behavior of Kahr and his comrades, we summoned Pöhner.

After a brief consultation, he decided to go to the police headquarters.

Major Hühnlein accompanied him; Zeller, with a platoon of his Combat League, was assigned to him for his personal protection.

Then I summoned the members of the Reichswehr and the state police to the military district headquarters.

My brave lad, Georg Völk, was also in the front ranks.

I told the comrades that, given the uncertain situation, I could not keep them with me and had to send them back to their units.

With tears in their eyes, the brave men left me, deeply shaken inside.

Following this, the Reichswehr officer on duty also reported off to General Ludendorff at attention.

I dismissed him with words of appreciation for his dutiful conduct. 213 By the early morning hours, there was almost no doubt that a turnaround must have occurred.

General Ludendorff and Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel therefore decided to drive to Hitler at the Bürgerbräukeller to discuss the situation with him.

I reported my departure to His Excellency Ludendorff, who shook my hand in farewell and promised him that I would fulfill my duty.

The general could not yet come to terms with the thought of having been betrayed.

As Captain Seydel escorted him to the car, the General said in parting: “Do you really think that a German general can break his word?” The entire soldierly character and greatness of this heroic leader shine through these words.

He could have, embittered and filled with disgust at so much deceit, like so many others, now driven back to his home, from where he had been summoned for a solemn oath.

He could easily have avoided all difficulties there.

But the general, with his straightforward mind, did not think of that for a single moment; he had committed himself to the popular uprising and remained true to it until the bitter end.

I was with the R.

K.

F.

Alone in the military district command and determined to hold my ground to the very end.

I could not, however, yet get used to the idea that Lossow, Seisser, and Kahr had defected.

When even the morning papers, especially the *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, brought enthusiastic reports of the “Völkische Revolution,” I shook off the gloomy thoughts of the night and looked forward to the further development of events with renewed confidence. But then news arrived that the Reichswehr and the state police were being sent to advance against the War Ministry to drive me out of

it; General von Lossow, Seisser, and Kahr were said to be in the Insonteriekaferne and directing a counter-operation from there.

Pöhner and Hühnlein were said to have been arrested.

I could not and would not believe that General von Lossow would lend a hand to such an action.

As my immediate superior, he surely would have had to send me some kind of notification or message beforehand.

However, nothing of the sort happened.

Since I could not receive any news or instructions from the Bürgerbräukeller either, I was left to my own devices.

The decision was not a difficult one for me: I had been ordered here and would not leave my post until ordered to do so.

I summoned the leaders to me and ordered them to put the building on a state of defense.

I assigned the individual units their positions and tasks; the deployment was to take place only upon my order.

In the morning, a few officers came by, after they had slept in and read their morning papers, to get some information.

Almost all of them quietly withdrew.

I had to smile bitterly at how bewildered a zealous patriot looked at me—one who wanted a position—when I told him he would have to go to the infantry barracks to compete.

No positions would be assigned here; instead, there would be a shooting soon.

He quickly left the inhospitable house.

In contrast, however, I must highlight another scene that took place later, when we were already surrounded on all sides: Two young students from the Lenz Volunteer Corps reported to me and asked to be assigned.

I informed them that, to my knowledge, their leader was not on our side, and that they were fighting a losing battle here.

Precisely for that reason, they now asked to join the R.

K.

F.

to prove their loyalty to us until death!

What a difference between these two young Germans and the all-too-many who filled my anteroom in the evening!

Then my brave stablehand Fritz Pfaller called from the barracks to ask if he should come with the horses for a ride.

Laughing, I thanked the good lad; he certainly would have managed to make his way to me with the horses.

But given the situation, I decided, as an exception, to forego my usual morning ride today.

Around 11 a.m., I received word that the Reichswehr had received orders at 7:40 a.m. to seize the military district headquarters and had assembled for the advance at 10:30 a.m.

I ordered the manning of the designated posts and expressly forbade all commanders from opening fire on the Reichswehr.

I said to the leaders: “The Reichswehr is a national force and will one day fight shoulder to shoulder with us in the struggle for liberation.” I reserved the authority to order fire for myself alone; the radio equipment provided ensured a secure and rapid connection with all units.

Gradually, the military district command was surrounded by the Reichswehr and the state police over a wide area.

Patrols I had dispatched encountered columns slowly advancing toward us.

Against the War Ministry, where the small detachment of R.

K.

F.—about 400 men—had taken up position, the following units advanced: / Infantry Regiment 19, staff and 1st

Company 11/20, staff, and one company of Engineer Battalion 7, Mortar Company 19, 4 armored cars, Motorized Unit 7, 5th

Artillery Regiment 7, parts of the II/ Artillery Regiment 7, nearly the entire state police force of the city of Munich with 4 armored vehicles; 3 platoons from Eichstätt, 3 platoons from Augsburg, 1 platoon from Landshut, 1 platoon from Ingolstadt.

In total: battalions, 1 engineer battalion, 1 mine-launching company, 3 batteries, 1 motorized unit, 8 armored cars, and nearly the entire Munich State Police, reinforced by 8 external companies.

Major General Ritter von Danner commanded the “assault corps”; his chief of staff was First Lieutenant Ritter von Saur.

A grim determination was etched on the faces of my loyal comrades of the N.

K.

F.

I knew that I could rely on them until death.

No questions, no doubts, no reproaches reached me.

With the self-evident loyalty of soldiers, they took their assigned positions.

They stood silently at their posts.

A feeling of complete trust filled me.

On the front facing Ludwigstraße, machine guns were lined up against machine guns in the windows; Schönseldstraße was secured against Ludwigstraße and the English Garden with barbed-wire entanglements and sentries.

Reserve units were stationed around the War Ministry building, in the courtyard, and inside the building itself.

The flag of the N.

K.

F., to which the Association had pledged its allegiance a few days earlier, was flying, carried by Himmler, behind the barbed wire on Ludwigstraße.

Standing next to it were Seydel, Oßwald, Count Du Moulin, and several messengers.

The “Münchner Zeitung,” Kahr’s organ, wrote in its issue of November 9–10, 1923—in which it naturally took a sharp stance against us—about the events at the War Ministry: “The entire Ludwigstraße was full of people, who, however, took to their heels when the troops fired a few blind machine-gun bursts toward the crowd.

The stormtroopers, however, did not clear the square; their leader stood firm as a wall, and his comrades all around struck up the song ‘O Deutschland hoch in Ehren,’ Subsequently, there was more firing, apparently indiscriminate; a second armored car also drove through Ludwigstraße, but the staff at the War Ministry did not leave their posts, not even when they were informed that artillery and mortar launchers had been positioned against the War Ministry.

Around 10 o’clock, bugles sounded and it was announced:

“That General von Epp and Captain Röhm had gone to the War Ministry as negotiators.” I had ordered that no shots were to be fired, and I knew I could rely on my men.

Thus, the advance of the Reichswehr, which was taking place right before our eyes, proceeded unhindered.

Not a hand moved, not a shot rang out, as the artillery took up position across from Schönseldstraße and aimed at us.

Nothing moved as machine guns were carried into the building across from us on Ludwigstraße and aimed at us, nothing as the mortar company took up position on the opposite side.

Silent and menacing, the barrels of our 216 machine guns stared out of the windows.

A single command, a single whistle would have sufficed: the capable Semmelbauer had trained his machine gun unit well; it could have taken on any force.

At times the thought crossed my mind, but I fought it off.

It must not go wrong.

With unshakable calm, the sentries stood at their assigned posts and manned the exits.

A Reichswehr officer—Major Ritter von Reitzenstein—requested entry into the War Ministry and remarked: “It’s unnecessary for you to be standing here; after all, the Tirpitz government has been proclaimed in Berlin!” The sentry guarding the Reich War Flag—Captain Baron von Reitzenstein—replied calmly: “Then it is also unnecessary for there to be mortar launchers over there.” He then calmly added the customary “It happens.”

The namesakes, two battle-hardened front-line officers, passed each other.

When an old woman standing in the crowd saw the armored cars driving out of Theresienstraße, she threw herself into the barbed-wire barrier, exclaiming: “If the young people have to get shot at, I don’t want to live anymore either!” An English newspaper reporter demanded passage to speak with the legitimate government.

When he was told to go to the infantry barracks, he said no, he wanted to speak to the legitimate new government and General Tudendorss; he wasn’t interested in the deposed one.

I was alone.

Only the flag flew proudly beside me; nearby stood my friends, upright and silent.

I felt that I was connected to each of my men by an invisible bond, and I knew that every order I gave would be obeyed without hesitation.

Blood brothers—until death!

The only thing that was not entirely pleasing was the presence of the Zeller Combat League, which lacked unconditional devotion and submission to me as well as thorough training.

But that could no longer be changed.

They were trapped with me and had to comply.

A tragic twist of fate had placed my longtime orderly officer, the loyal Lieutenant Höfle, directly opposite me as platoon leader of the mortar company.

I felt and knew how this young and noble officer would have overcome the conflict of conscience in the clash of duties had he received the order to fire.

Almost at the same time, at noon, I received a visit from General von Epp, accompanied by First Lieutenant von Hörauf and Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann.

The chivalrous First Lieutenant von Hörauf, to whom I owed so much in my military career, had rushed to Epp's side with the intention of joining him in offering me advice and assistance.

General von Epp, with whom I was not exactly on the best of terms at the time, had not hesitated for a moment to answer the call and sought me out.

Immediately.

The noble and great character of this rare man moved me deeply, just as I felt heartfelt gratitude for the nobility of my regimental comrade Hörauf. 217 Epp and Hörauf advised me to surrender; I thanked them for their comradely advice, but I could not follow it.

I had been placed in this position and was determined not to vacate it until I received orders to do so.

However, after Losso had left us, given the situation, only one man could give that order: General Lüdendorff.

Even General von Epp's objection that I was now in a besieged fortress and had to act with all due diligence could not make me waver.

Ludendorff had left me that morning, convinced that I would hold the military district command.

No further specific instructions were needed from him: I had no contact with him whatsoever, but he should be able to rely on me.

A short while later, Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann arrived, sent to me, as he said, as a parliamentarian from Lossow, and called out to me: "What more do you want? Everything you wanted has already been achieved.

A new government is in power in Berlin, and everything is going smoothly!" His words were imbued with friendship and camaraderie.

Under their influence, I decided to agree to a two-hour ceasefire.

Together with General von Epp, I went to meet the commander of the Reichswehr standing opposite me, Colonel von Pflügel.

The encounter with this brave and noble officer moved me deeply.

With tears in his eyes, he shook my hand.

General von Epp and Colonel von Pflügel vouched for the ceasefire.

Meanwhile, Hofmann wanted to seek instructions from Ludendorff.

I handed the order regarding the Imperial War Flag to Lieutenant Oßwald.

Captain Seydel and Count du Moulin, the most loyal of the loyal, accompanied me under the command of General von Epp to the enemy commander, General von Danner, in the canteen of the Zandspolizel.

First Lieutenant Bergen, my regimental comrade, who commanded one of the opposing companies of the Munich State Police, joined me out of noble friendship.

The encounter with General von Danner and his chief of staff, Lieutenant Colonel von Saur, was brief and bitter.

I could barely control myself.

Danner's demeanor was unfriendly and cold; I rebuffed an insulting remark with proud sharpness.

It may be that he was trying to master his inner agitation through deliberate brusqueness.

Saur stood at the window and looked down on us with the superior air of a "victor."

General von Danner first had to come to terms with Lt. Tossow.

Meanwhile, the alarm message arrived regarding the events at the Field Marshal's Hall.

General Ludendorff was said to have fallen.

For many officers of the Reserve Army and State Police, the long-practiced restraint now gave way to an elemental outburst of emotion.

A cry of indignation and shame rang through the room.

Officers hurled their swords and caps to the ground; despair and wild bitterness overwhelmed the others. Now I could no longer rest; I had to return to my troops.

Without waiting for a response from Lossow or Danner, I hurried back to the War Ministry.

There I received the shocking news that two of my comrades had paid for their loyalty with their blood.

Fa u ft had been struck down by a fatal bullet; Casella was dying and asked to speak with me.

The distinguished physician Dr.

Ketterer, who—as a soldier, as a doctor, and as a human being, equally exemplary—served as a man on the front lines of the N.

K.

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— took the seriously wounded man under his care.

I was unable to bid farewell to my loyal comrade; General von Epp held me back.

Captain Wimmer conveyed the terms of surrender: 1.

Honorable lowering of the Imperial War Flag, 2.

Surrender of the weapons to the state police, 3.

Honorable release of Commander Captain Röhm.

I was deeply moved.

The fate of two dear comrades shook me deeply.

At this point, however, it should be noted that, in contrast to the planned armed raid at Odeonsplatz, a tragic series of misunderstandings appears to have played a role in the fatal shots fired at the War Ministry.

Investigations conducted by one of my officers of the R.

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Later, upon joining the Reichswehr, the following was reported: The Reichswehr ⸗Will Engineer Company, which was stationed on the right flank of the 2nd Infantry Regiment 19 in reserve behind the wall of the Military District Command, and was standing with unloaded rifles on the express orders of its commander, reportedly came under fire from the Military District Command, resulting in two engineers being slightly wounded.

A machine-gun volley fired by the 2/19 in response to these shots then killed R.

K.

F.⸗man Faust and fatally wounded Lieutenant Casella.

The sappers now claim that they were fired upon from a window located on the first floor of a rear building of the military district command, which towered over the wall behind which they were standing.

The shooter was said to be a man who stood out because of his yellow windbreaker and yellow peaked cap.

Since the sappers, who were anything but hostile toward the nationalist associations, put these statements on record, I do not doubt their subjective credibility.

In the eyewitness accounts, the description of the yellow color of the unfortunate shooter's clothing is surprising, as is the consistent statement that he wore cockades on the front of his cap.

This would clearly identify the individual in question as a member of the so-called "Kampfbund München"; for all members of the Reichskriegsflagge wore gray caps and windbreakers and, moreover, no cockades, but black-white-red and white-blue horizontal stripes on the right and left of the cap.

It cannot therefore be ruled out that an irresponsible individual member of the "Kampfbund München," contrary to strict orders and to a certain extent on his own initiative, waged war and thus became the instigator of the tragic events without ever being identified.

This possibility also exists because monitoring the members of the Kampfbund München was very difficult; Zeller had moved out with part of his unit during the night to serve as Pöhner's escort.

From the very beginning, the formation was not regarded as a welcome addition.

Even a proven man like Oberft Schraudenbach could not overturn the overall negative impression.

In any case, part of this unit did not behave well during the mass uprising; in particular, they conducted negotiations with the Reichswehr on their own initiative and, in some cases, even voluntarily disbanded before receiving orders, so that some of these unreliable soldiers had to be reminded of their duty at gunpoint.

A unit acting so arbitrarily can therefore be expected to have had the snipers in its sights, just as the engineers describe.

For the Reichswehr, this would constitute a significant exoneration, if not a complete excuse.

On the other hand, the responsibility can never lie with the N.

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or the leadership of the military district garrison.

The shots fired at the engineers triggered the infantry's return fire.

The 2nd Battalion of the 19th Infantry Regiment had entered the military district command building from the rear, in violation of the agreed ceasefire.

The officer in charge was First Lieutenant Braun.

This officer was himself a member of the R.

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and had enjoyed my trust; now he stood before me and my comrades as an enemy.

In view of the general ceasefire, the conduct of his unit is attributable to him even if the firing was initiated independently and without orders. 5 The unfortunate machine gunner can be credited with having acted in the heat of the moment and, in all likelihood, not having fired at pre-determined targets, but merely having intended to rake the lower part of the opposing house wall.

It is to be assumed that a ricochet struck poor Faust, who was actually taking cover, while Lieutenant Tasella, at the very moment he stepped unsuspectingly out of the gate onto the wall running at a right angle to the wall under fire, was struck by one of the last shots in the burst fired from left to right.

Such was the result of the investigations conducted later.

Immediately after Captain Wimmer, Lieutenant Colonel Hofmann also returned and brought news from General Ludendorff, who gave me full freedom to decide.

General von Epp urged me to accept the terms.

After a brief internal struggle, I summoned the non-commissioned officers and explained the situation and conditions to them. 220 I briefly heard their opinion, which was not to surrender, but to fight a desperate battle to the death.

I knew my brave men and had expected this answer.

I could have embraced them, filled with inner pride that such men recognized me as their leader.

But briefly and harshly I gave the order to withdraw the detachments and posts and assemble in the courtyard of the War Ministry.

The order was carried out without a word.

In the presence of the dead comrade Faust, the Imperial War Flag stood at attention for the last time before its leader.

Once more I was able to look each of the faithful in the eye and shake their hands.

That poignant moment of farewell will remain in my memory forever.

Deeply moved, the commander of the Reichswehr, the Knightly Colonel von Pflügel, attended the farewell ceremony, while First Lieutenant Braun and his soldiers, who had gone mad, desecrated the solemnity of the moment.

First Lieutenant Bergen of the State Police took command of the R.

K.

F., with dignity, tact, and restraint.

One final farewell to the deceased.

Then First Lieutenant Hofmann accompanied me to Captain Wimmer’s waiting car.

Lieutenant Oßwald gave me a triple cheer, which boomed across the square like a cry for vengeance.

An officer of the Reichswehr snatched his sword from his side and, no longer able to control his agitation, hurled it to the ground.

Captain Seydel and Count Du Moulin did not leave my side and got into the car with me.

Then the car drove me, a prisoner, past the Prinz-Arnulf Barracks to the police headquarters.

A world collapsed before me.

Good faith was gone.

At the same time, as the shots in the War Ministry had claimed two innocent lives, General Ludendorff, Adolf Hitler, State Court Judge von der Pfordten, First Lieutenant Kriebel, Captain Göring, First Lieutenant Brückner, Dr.

Weber, Major Streck, the Kolb brothers, Dr.

von Scheubner-Richter, von Graefe, Feder, Streicher, and other leaders at the head of an enthusiastic and jubilantly welcomed procession from Marimilianstraße to Odeonsplatz.

Beside General Ludendorff stood his faithful servant Neubauer; at Hitler’s side stood his fearless companion Graf.

At the Feldherrnhalle, the bullets of the state police rained down on their ranks; loyal Germans rolled in their own blood; some sought cover, threw themselves to the ground, or returned fire.

The name of State Police First Lieutenant Baron von Godin will never be associated with that glory in connection with this bloodbath.

The victor of Liège and Tannenberg, however, strode upright, without batting an eyelid or quickening his pace, through the ranks toward the fire.

At his side was the officer who had fought on the front lines without interruption for four and a half years, Major Streck.

Hitler, who had sustained an injury, was driven away by friends in a car.

President Pöhner and his companion, Major Hühnlein, had already been taken into custody that morning after Colonel Banzer entered the police headquarters.

State Police First Lieutenant von Prosch, who had interceded on their behalf, was arrested along with

them.

On the evening of November 8, Banzer had jubilantly

; at the Bürgerbräu Hall, he had thrown his arms around the National Socialists; now he was imprisoning their leaders.

General Aechter had been detained at the Pioneer Barracks; other officers who had sought to mediate were held at the Infantry Barracks.

Along the Bürgerbräuleller–Giefinger Bridge line, the Kampfbund and the state police faced off at the bridges; at the Friedensengel, Captain Oesterreicher had taken up position with his fine Oberland Battalion.

It is thanks to the prudent conduct of the leaders on both sides that no clashes occurred there.

Likewise, a bloodbath was prevented only through the courage and initiative of two men in front of the Upper Bavarian government building.

Here, Captain Schweinle of the State Police, with his small detachment of a hundred men, had taken charge of securing the government building.

First Lieutenant Roßbach had moved in with the infantry company to occupy the building; artillery and machine guns had been brought into position.

Neither commander was clear on how the situation was unfolding; both had been ordered to occupy the government building.

Only one officer of the State Police Command seemed to know how the situation had actually unfolded and urged the use of force.

But Captain Schweinle did not lose his head or his nerve despite the threat of an attack by a superior force; it will remain to his and First Lieutenant Noßbach’s lasting credit that Germans did not fire on Germans here.

At the various command posts and troop assembly points, events had unfolded as follows during the night and morning, as was often only revealed later: At the staff headquarters, upon receiving news of the revolution in the Bürgerbräufeller, Generals Baron von Kreß and Rufth, Lieutenant Colonel a.

D.

Baron von Kreß and Major von Leeb had gathered.

General von Danner, in consultation with the State Police (Major von Imhoss), had ordered the alert and the manning of the posts mandated by the alarm regulations, without knowing what was actually going on.

General Baron von Kreß, who had been designated as Von Geßler’s successor following Lossow’s dismissal, likely had a special directive, unless he received it separately through the liaison officer,

Captain von Hanneken.

General von Danner placed himself at his disposal upon his orders and called the troops to arms against the new government.

His conduct and skill have always reminded me of Octavio Piccolomini in Schiller's "Wallenstein." "To Prince Piccolomini!"—with these words ends the final act of the harrowing drama. "To Lieutenant General von Danner!"—thus ends the ill-fated act in which Major General von Danner, at Gessler's behest, mobilized the troops against the popular uprising.

When General von Lossow entered the circle of those gathered at the city command post, he faced the choice of acknowledging and carrying out Danner's orders or being held captive by his own generals.

The receipt for the mobilization of the Reichswehr was now handed to him.

Lossow decided to accept the given circumstances.

Had I, when I knocked on the museum gate with Captain Seydel that night, forced my way in instead of going home empty-handed, then I would likely have recognized the circumstances in time and been able to prevent their harmful consequences.

Kahr and Seisser were still at it at that time.

They would both likely have preferred to see the entire movement confined to Bavaria, but they certainly did not consider a defection as long as they had not yet gathered in the government of Upper Bavaria (around 1 a.m.).

Before that, Matt and Pittinger may have been trying to sway the State Commissioner, perhaps even before he met with Pöhner.

Pöhner told us about this meeting that very morning, when we had invited him to the Webfreis Command.

Seisser, who had informed his wife that evening of his appointment as Reich Minister of Police, had issued no orders against the Kampfbund until 1 a.m.

It was only around this time that a shift in their attitude may have occurred.

Whether this change became final only at the infantry barracks, where the two of them went in the early morning hours, I do not know.

But I believe so.

I do not even wish to attempt to unravel the final connections and motives.

The web of lies is too dense and far-reaching for it to be worth unraveling it today. "I am surprised that the beams do not bend," said attorney Dr.

Holl in his speech during the major trial.

And indeed, not even in the courtroom was it possible to shed light on this tragedy.

The People's Court, of course, should have made this task the very foundation of its search for the truth; yet here, too, heavy veils hung over the political stage, which the judges did not find the strength to part.

As of around 3 a.m., no change in the situation was known at the Police Headquarters.

Upon inquiry, the police headquarters informed the officer tasked with carrying out the takeover of the Upper Bavarian government: "On behalf of Foreign Minister Pöhner, the buildings occupied by the State Police shall remain under their control." At the Prinz-Arnulf Barracks, the news of the Nationalist Revolution was received with jubilation by officers and men of the State Police.

H Only a few officers, personal friends of mine, were upset with me for not having informed them.

And rightly so, for I had promised to let them know in good time.

But I, too, had been taken by surprise by the rapid turn of events and was therefore unable to keep my promise.

Colonel von Seisser accepted the congratulations of his officers and said not a word to any of them, nor gave even the slightest indication that he rejected the new order.

Even in the late morning hours, the state police remained at the disposal of the new government.

It was not until around 7 a.m. that the turn of events became known here, when the order arrived to arrest General Ludendorff.

However, officers and enlisted men did not take this change of course calmly at all.

There was widespread outrage among many companies; many officers declared categorically that they would not fire under any circumstances.

Captain Schraut had made the same vow; he met his death at the Feldherrnhalle in the ranks of the state police.

Even in the barracks of the Reichswehr, the transition did not proceed without friction.

Upright German officers and soldiers stood up for their convictions to the very end, even to the point of surrendering their positions and careers.

That very night, it was ordered that the Bavarian Division once again be placed under the command of General von Seeckt.

General von Lossow was initially completely broken after his arrival at the infantry barracks.

I can only guess at what was going on in this officer's mind.

Five years later, I still hold the same view today as I did on November 9,

November 1923: I consider his conduct that night unforgivable and reprehensible.

But I could never hate or despise the general whom I held in such high esteem as long as I was his subordinate, nor will I ever be able to.

In the conflict of duties, the individual is often absent at the turning points of his life; responsibility and duty pile up too high; one misstep—and the gray wave of fate rolls on and comes to an end, without the weak human being being able to offer it any further support.

This is how I view the tragic role of General von Lossow.

This assessment is not altered by the fact that the general, after the 9th,

November.

Berlin kept him in his post for only a few more months; then his military fate was fulfilled.

General von Lossow did not resort to reckless action until the early morning hours of November 9.

to act recklessly.

General von Danner and several General Staff officers were not uninvolved in this.

He refused negotiations; all attempts at mediation between the Kampfbund and the Reichswehr were flatly rejected.

Major Sir P., who had been sent to negotiate, was taken into custody and treated with contempt; Reichswehr officers, such as Colonel Leupold, who had offered to act as mediators, were no longer allowed to return.

The conduct of the commander of the 2nd

Company of Infantry Regiment 19 before, during, and after the action against the Military District Command is a chapter unto itself.

And to the credit of the Bavarian 7th

Division, it must be noted that it stands without parallel.

This officer, known since the war as a daredevil, revealed on November 9,

November 1923 revealed a downright alarming inadequacy of his innermost being.

At that time, the situation was such that it could only be mastered by all those involved on both sides through extraordinary self-discipline.

From a wearer of epaulettes in particular, one would have expected clenched teeth, ironclad composure,

and the utmost tact.

First Lieutenant Braun considered it more appropriate to let his inner state of mind run free without restraint.

What he felt and thought was literally written all over his face.

And this image of an excessive, seemingly suddenly awakened animosity toward the Kampfbund garrison instantly spread to his subordinates, as is always the case in such situations.

Perhaps some of the remarks or acts attributed to him before and during the disembarkation scene in the courtyard of the War Ministry do not correspond to the facts: the image of First Lieutenant Braun has become indelibly etched in the minds of all eyewitnesses to the events of that time as that of a man who failed in an important task as a leader, who strutted about in a provocative, not to say theatrical, pose with his carbine slung over his shoulder, who felt it necessary to constantly display the expression of a victor, and who treated his opponents not as soldiers, but as criminals.

Braun has only himself to blame if his provocative behavior at the time became a source of the wildest rumors.

One could hardly have commanded a more unsuitable person to take over the War Ministry.

Admittedly, they had just selected, from among the many officers outside at 1/19, the one who had volunteered, with unmistakable zeal, to take on the task.

It was a fatal mistake that Braun had only recently been entrusted with the command of the company.

Thus, at a decisive moment, a unit was deployed that was from the outset ill-equipped to handle the extraordinary situation and carried within it the seeds of daily incidents from the very beginning. 8 None of the Reichswehr officers otherwise involved in the evacuation had incurred such accusations as First Lieutenant Braun; he must come to terms with himself, just as he will have to justify his actions before God and his conscience.

Proof of how a bad example breeds bad followers may be found in a remark that caused particular outrage among the R.

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: “What, they want to take action against Kahr?

I’ll shoot them down like dogs with a smile on my face.” I do not cite this unsavory remark here merely to illustrate the emotional depth of some rank-and-file soldier who has gone wild.

Rather, it seems to me to prove that the hateful manner of proceeding—which I find almost incomprehensible—displayed by a large part of the 2nd Infantry Regiment 19 on November 9

November, can be attributed to false information and the incitement of the troops.

For there was just as little talk of action against Kahr as there was of action against the government and the Reichswehr.

Moreover, an officer of the Reichswehr had received the written declaration signed by General Ludendorff stating that the Kampfbund would not attack the Reichswehr barracks and had personally handed it over to General von Zlossow, It was the same deception of the troops that found expression in the fact that external units ordered to Munich still paid homage to the new government during their transport and only learned of their true tasks before their deployment.

I must also acknowledge, in all fairness, that the bitterness of the Reichswehr in the Pioneer Division toward the units of the Kampfbund, which sought to seize the barracks by force without right or mandate, seems understandable to me and not unjustified.

Finally, it is not worth snatching the name of the pensioner from oblivion, who may claim for himself the unenviable fame of having laid hands on the great German commander of the World War.

In contrast to these figures, I must mention here a few other men who, like Epp, Pflügel, Hörauf, and Hofmann, stood firm, whose upright and dignified conduct, however, was both on the 11. 1923, as well as within the confines of the court, a tribute 5 e Here I mention Colonel Leupold of the Infantry School, a distinguished, soldierly character who always walked his path with dignity and integrity and to whom any compromise of conviction was foreign.

Major Hafel- mapr presented a picture of equal integrity and strength of character, a fervent patriot and true soldier in demeanor and conviction, the sort that Frederick the Great had demanded of his officers. 2% Last but not least, the young officer of impeccable conviction, sincere and undaunted, Lieutenant Roßmann, a man to whom lies and pretense were foreign, who could not be dissuaded by any threat from his commitment to what he had recognized and experienced as true.

In the early afternoon hours of November 9, 1923, the Nationalist Uprising in Munich had been crushed.

In front of the Wittelsbach residence, from which, five years earlier, howling gangs of criminals had driven out the aged Prince of Bavaria, 13 German heroes had paid with their lives for their determination to erase the shame of that day.

Future generations will speak their names with reverence and gratitude.

The site will remain consecrated for all time.

Even today, the Free State and its “national” government do not tolerate the laying of wreaths on the memorial day honoring the fallen.

In 1926, the floral wreaths hung there by the Von Roßbachers were torn down and trampled by Munich police officers.

A Baron von Stein or Bismarck would certainly not have ordered a firing on November 9,

November, even if they had not approved of the uprising, certainly not ordered shots to be fired, but

would have harnessed the enthusiasm of the crowds to their own ends. “The state” of 1923 opened fire on them—that very state whose birth date is precisely that 7th

November 1918.

That was not merely a crime; it was more than that: it was sheer stupidity!

The cavalry captain of the state police, who, in a noble and supreme fulfillment of duty, leaped between the lines to prevent the fratricidal struggle among Germans and avert bloodshed, sank down, struck dead.

Of him, as of his comrades who fell in the performance of their military duty, history will one day proclaim: “They, too, died for the liberation of the Fatherland!” The leaders of the freedom movement, who had marched at the head of the column, stood—insofar as they were not lying dead or wounded in their own blood—in the guardroom of the Royal

At the residence, among them, inflamed with holy wrath, General Ludendorss.

The so-called “saviors of the fatherland”—yes, as they plundered the fatherland and thought they were saving it—nevertheless shrank from the final disgrace of their “deed”: throwing the true savior of the fatherland in its most difficult hour—as the enemy Chief of Staff, General Buat, wondrously called him —into prison.

In public, free and unmolested, the general was able to choose his residence on Prinz-Ludwigs-Höhe.

In reality, however, the “state” laid a network of spies around his house; every walk, every visitor was observed, the mail was monitored, money letters arriving for the dependents of the freedom fighters were confiscated, and the telephone was constantly monitored by an officer of the Reichswehr assigned specifically for this purpose.

The remaining leading officers of the Kampfbund, including Dr.

Weber, Major Streck, and First Lieutenant Brückner, were either arrested immediately or after a few days; some, such as First Lieutenant Kriebel, Captain Göring, and First Lieutenant Roßbach, preferred to evade their opponents’ pursuit by crossing the border.

The units of the Oberland and the National Socialists, deprived of their leaders, retreated and in part joined forces with the Kampfbund troops that were holding the river crossings.

From there, they moved into the forests outside Munich.

Other units, despairing of God and man, seized by disgust and despair.

They cast off their weapons and went to Kaufbeuren or allowed themselves to be captured without resistance.

F After my departure, the N.

K.

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Then they formed a funeral procession, laid their dead comrade Faust on the bier, and escorted him to his parents' house.

The crowd respectfully saluted the silent procession of the R.

K.

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on its final march through the streets of Munich.

Conversely, however, many a petty-bourgeois and Jewish face also displayed undisguised schadenfreude, only intensified by the sight of the dead man, only to immediately smooth out into harmless lines when a threatening glance swept over from the silently marching procession or a fist seemed to clench to strike.

As the procession turned into Promenadeplatz, it was generally noticeable how various Semitic heads peered down from the first floor of a Jewish haberdashery shop in an insolent manner, making no effort to hide their satisfaction with the state of affairs.

A wild outcry ran through the ranks at that moment, and by a hair's breadth some of the agitated men would have stormed the Jewish house to avenge their mocked, fallen comrade.

But even faster, the grimaces, twisted in sudden fear, had slipped back behind the window curtains.

Participants in the march assured me that, aside from the drainage scene at the military district headquarters, this experience at Promenadeplatz had etched itself most indelibly into their memories of the events of that time.

Then the mournful procession reached its destination unhindered.

Up there, in front of the crowd at Theresienhöhe, it took its leave of the fallen soldier.

In honor of the fallen, the demobilized troops marched past their comrade's body one last time in a salute.

I myself had arrived at the police headquarters around 4 o'clock in the afternoon and made myself available there.

My loyal men, Sepdel and Count du Moulin, had remained with me.

Only after serious representations by the police officers, who behaved politely and correctly, did they leave me, at my request.

After a day in solitary confinement, I was transferred on the 10th

and 11th

November in a shared cell with Dr.

Weber, Major Streck, and First Lieutenant von Prosch in Cell 30.

On the 10th

Leistelen, the Kolb brothers, and 5th Lieutenant Kuhn; on the 11th,

Lieutenant Berchtold joined us—228 It was not until November 12

November did the first interrogation take place in Neudeck, where I had been taken in a horse-drawn cart.

On the 14th

November, I was transferred to Stadelheim by car. 28.

Stadelheim.

Not far from Munich, surrounded by high walls, lies the Stadelheim Penitentiary.

The place was not unknown to me.

In the last days of April 1919, when German volunteers advanced on Munich under black-white-red flags to liberate the Bavarian capital from the rule of the councils, Stadelheim was also occupied.

Pöhner was the stern warden of the institution at the time; he laughed at the councils' threats and stood his ground: not a single red rag fluttered from the gables.

Here, too, the councils had taken high-ranking figures of the royal state—senior officers and officials—as hostages.

The front-line soldiers and Young Germany opened the gates for them.

Not even five years had passed since then: now the prison gates closed behind the fighters for German freedom.

Behind the "irresponsible fellows" who had fought and bled for Germany for four years, who had saved and preserved it from the chaos of the councils, and who now wanted to lift it up to freedom.

Just how "immature" and "rash" we were is evident from the fact that we had put the very people in government positions who were now locking us up.

Or do you no longer remember March 13,

March 1920, Dr.

Von Kahr?

Thanks to the care of Mr. von Kahr, Major Hühnlein, Major Streck, and Dr.

Weber also took up winter quarters in Stadelheim.

For a long time, Dietrich Eckart, already seriously ill, complaining of insomnia and heart problems, but always in unbroken spirits, shared our fate.

We officers wore—much to the displeasure of the prison administration—uniforms and decorations.

Day and night we were alone in solitary cells; only in the afternoons did we meet in the exercise yard, where we were able to communicate through glances and brief exchanged words.

Whenever one's spirits threatened to wane, the triumphant eyes of our comrades would lift them again.

We also received news from the outside through various channels.

To our satisfaction, we learned that the government of the Free State of Bavaria had left the villa of the publisher and bookseller Lehmann, where it had taken up residence, without causing any damage.

And that Minister Wutzlhofer was able to recover all 229 foreign currency notes he had kept there in the bookcase.

Also that Cardinal von Faulhaber had decided against leaving Munich.

We learned of the fate of Hitler, Kriebel, Roßbach, and Göring, and that other comrades-in-arms had been detained in the remand prison in Neudeck, including Pöhner, Frick, Seidel, and Brückner; in Landsberg and

A.

Streicher, Amann, and Prince Wrede.

We were also pleased to hear that the people of Munich had organized rallies in support of our cause.

The General Staff Officer who had saved the Fatherland, as we learned, ruled his loyal, beloved people from behind barbed wire and machine guns.

It almost seemed as if Mr. von Kahr wanted to make up for a missed opportunity here, since during the war—even though he was a reserve officer—he had not had the chance to serve at the front behind barbed wire and machine guns.

The Reichswehr, the state police, and the Schutzmannschaft were apparently not always the objects of expressions of sympathy.

The mounted police, in particular, often felt the need to launch formal charges against the "crowded"

crowd—equestrian feats that would have been more worthy of a better cause.

The Munich populace repaid these “courtesies” by coining the catchphrase “Danube Cossacks,” a fact that, for historical reasons, should not go unmentioned.

But even within these organs of the state itself, there was by no means universal harmony and contentment.

Troops and officers were often extremely upset by the tasks expected of them: it was only with great effort and over time that discipline and a willingness to serve were restored or maintained.

Many officers preferred to resign rather than subject themselves to a constant conflict between duty and conscience.

Others, however, stood up to their supreme commander without fear and without regard for their own safety in the noble struggle for justice and honor.

The names of Colonel Hierl and Captain Ritter von Kraußer deserve to be mentioned first in this context.

After their honorable resignation from the active army, both devoted all their strength to the national struggle.

Many non-commissioned officers and enlisted men were in no way inferior to their superiors in courage and conviction. 1 The dissolution and banning of our associations, the suppression of all public activity in the national movement, the suppression of our press, and the gagging of all other literature came to our ears.

In the same way, we heard of the self-sacrificing resistance of like-minded friends.

We welcomed with great satisfaction the founding of the Combat League of German Officers, later the German Nationalist Officers’ League, which took place at the instigation of Captain Weiß and under the leadership of General Achter.

So there were still men out there who held our banner high. 230 The fact that officers in particular were leading the way here pleased me all the more, as I already viewed the officers’ leagues as such with great reservation back then.

By 1923, I no longer saw any fundamental need for them.

In my opinion, the officers belonged in the association of their soldiers.

These associations would undoubtedly have a field of activity if they took it upon themselves to preserve and promote the special professional knowledge of their members.

It is debatable, however, that the majority sees its tasks as limited to fostering camaraderie and indulges too much in retroactive reflections.

That is the case today; it was no different back then.

For this reason, the officers' associations largely viewed the events of November 1923 with incomprehension or hostility.

The goal of their policy was to be "apolitical."

By this they meant allowing themselves to be uncritically drawn into the political wake of the "state."

"Non-political" politicians, then!

The appeal they drafted on the morning of November 9, 1923, provides insight into the state of mind of the executive committees of the Bavarian Officers' Associations.

I therefore include it here in its entirety: To all former officers, medical and veterinary officers, and civil servants of the old army.

In accordance with the will of the warlord and out of a sense of duty, the three Bavarian officers' associations have, from the very first day, unreservedly stood behind the Kampfbund, which emerged from the Storm Division of the National Socialist German Workers' Party, the Oberland, and the others had previously adopted a stance that in no way precluded support for the General State Commissioner.

However, through its violent and outrageous actions on the night of September 8,

November in Munich, taken a stance against the General State Commissioner and thus also against the will of our Supreme Commander, who remains loyal to the General State Commissioner and may now be in danger.

Officers, non-commissioned officers, and veterinary officers, and officials of the old army—you who still remain true to your oath to the flag—rally around your Supreme Commander and the General State Commissioner!

Be ready to protect them with your lives!

This is not a matter of settling dynastic issues, but a service for the good of the Bavarian and German fatherland!

Follow the orders of your officer corps immediately!

Withdraw from the Combat League! Be aware that if you remain there, you will be permanently separated from your Supreme Commander and your old comrades.

Our Bavarian homeland cannot be found, nor can its task in the Reich be fulfilled, if patriotic circles turn against a man who acts in a decidedly patriotic manner and who has been entrusted with power to bring about conditions that are sound in the true sense! The chairmen of the local groups and officers' regimental associations are requested to inform all members who can be reached in any way of the impending call-up.

The officers, etc., insofar as they are not already assigned to the military units listed on page 231, are to assemble today at 5:00 p.m. at the police casino on Türkenstraße.

Attire: Civilian clothes with a white armband, light raincoat.

Only those officers who stand behind the General State Commissioner without reservation and were not involved in yesterday's incident against Kahr are to report.

The out-of-town local groups and officers of the regimental

associations are to take appropriate measures

to ensure that their officers, etc.

to the state authorities of the respective

which will be notified by the General State Commissariat, Munich, November 9,

November 1923.

Bavarian Regional Association of the German Officers' Federation: Signed

Von Tut schek, Lieutenant General (ret.)

D.

Bavarian Regional Association of the N.

D.

O.: Signed

Rauchenberger, Lieutenant General (ret.)

D.

Associations of the Bavarian

Officer Regimental Associations: Signed

Von Tannstein, retired

Ret.

It was precisely the Nationalist Officers, who had banded together after the November days, who proved to them that they were not "politicians," but above all soldiers.

They rejected a politics of ifs and buts and did not simply allow themselves to be ordered around politically.

Rather, in accordance with the old Ossician principle, they went straight ahead, formed their own

judgment, and held fast to the fighting stance.

Viewed from this perspective, I recognized the legitimacy of the Officers' Combat League.

That it was even necessary to a certain extent, however, was to be demonstrated only by events that unfolded following the action of the 27 Bavarian generals.

For the sake of context, I shall anticipate this episode here. Twenty-seven Bavarian generals declared the Prussian General Ludendorff to be in a state of excommunication because, in their view, he had denied the heir to the Bavarian crown the due respect.

The "apolitical" officers' associations followed the generals' example and expelled General Ludendorff from the "professional community."

When asked what this "exclusion" actually meant, most of them, of course, did not know themselves.

Those officers who did not submit to this coercion of conscience and this terror were forcibly expelled from the associations, though quietly encouraged to continue attending the associations' events as guests.

The personal dispute between His Majesty the King and General Ludendorff—to which I shall return in greater detail later—was thereby dragged into the public eye: every officer was expected to take a position on a matter that had to remain beyond his judgment and decision.

That is no way to serve one's king!

Among other consequences, this course of action resulted in the general public, and eventually even foreign countries, taking an interest in the matter. 232 Thus wrote, for example,

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the English press at the time, "that even a king has no right to insult a General Ludendorff.

Ludendorff's honor is worth exactly as much as that of a king." The officers' associations, who saw themselves as "guardians of professional honor," thus had to endure lectures from abroad on matters of honor, since they had, through their own conduct, challenged the world's public opinion to take a stand.

For—and this sense of proportion was evidently lacking in these associations—General Ludendorff was, after all, not just any fellow officer, but a historical figure whose name and character are known and honored by the whole world.

I therefore wish to take this unpleasant incident as an opportunity to reflect on the manner in which matters of honor are handled within the circles of former officers and to seek clarity.

The Royal Officer, raised in the honorific tradition of the sovereign prince and Emperor Wilhelm I,

, recognized only the King as the arbiter of the honor of his class.

Male pride and class consciousness granted this privilege solely to the first representative of the class.

This prerogative is non-transferable.

Since November 1918, there has been no longer any class of Royal Officers.

The King can therefore no longer judge matters of class honor; the upholding of personal honor has fallen back upon the individual himself.

Association honor courts may sit in judgment and rule on violations of the spirit and purpose of the association; they are not called upon to assume for themselves the royal prerogative of being the guardian and judge of the honor of the order of all former Royal Officers.

Today, when political differences also come into play, less so than ever since 1918.

Alongside the nationalist officers, it was above all the students whose fighting spirit and loyalty strengthened our courage.

The young academics of 1923, still under the psychological influence of the war, carried within them that very spirit which, 110 years earlier, had inspired the founders of their military and fraternity societies—that spirit which had enabled them to fight at Langemark and led them into the Freikorps in 1919.

What a Prussian Minister of Culture in 1927 presumed to demand of the German student body, he would not have dared to do at that time.

Had it not been for the unyielding nationalist and Greater German will, which could not be confined to work in the borderlands, his inglorious attempt would have failed from the very beginning.

The spirit of 1923 has been replaced by the spirit of the times, the spirit of 1927/28.

Yet: “What you call the spirit of the times is, in essence, the spirit of the masters themselves, in which the times are reflected.” Only the National Socialist Student Union is waging today the struggle that in 1923 the entire German student body, the hope of the people and the fatherland, fought shoulder to shoulder with the poorest of our fellow countrymen. 233 If the German student leader does not return to these nationalistic ideals of struggle, then, I fear, his time will soon be definitively over.

The German people as a whole have less understanding today than ever before for mere fraternity customs.

The manly struggle of Minister General Dr.

Roth, who, despite the fact that he was a member of parliament, led him into protective custody in Landsberg, must not be forgotten.

Nor should we forget the unyielding fighting spirit of the tried-and-true Captain Weiß, who relentlessly put people in their place and fought for the movement with great enthusiasm.

Dr.

Buttmann also distinguished himself as a nationalist fighter back then.

For Captain Heiß, the leader of the Reichsflagge, his stance in support of Kahr cost him a considerable portion of his followers, who united under Lieutenant Llebel in the “Altreichsflagge” and pledged their allegiance to the nationalist cause.

General von Kleinhenz’s volunteer units, which on November 9

November still numbered 14 companies (two of which were fully deployed in the Archiepiscopal Ordinariate), fell apart.

Captain Ehrhardt, who sought to rally the scattered followers of the banned associations under his banner, met with indignant rejection.

It seems to me as though the path of this once-proven Freikorps commander, from the peak he had climbed with bold momentum in March 1920, has slowly and steadily led him into the more comfortable, broad streets of the lowlands.

The treatment in prison was bearable.

The prison warden was the typical bureaucrat who performed his duties strictly by the book.

Everything was orderly and prescribed.

To obtain any small item needed for personal comfort or hygiene, a written request or a personal appearance before the prison board was required.

I did not want to submit to that.

I refused right from the start and replied to the sergeant’s instruction: “I am not accustomed to asking, but to commanding.” Then I preferred to do without it.

A truly great man, Napoleon, once said when he was held captive on a lonely island: “Where I cannot command, I remain silent.” Unfortunately, I could not always rise to such greatness; from time to time I had to vent my anger through words and writing.

The guards, who were largely on our side at heart—since they were former soldiers—did everything they could, given the circumstances and without violating their duty, to make our stay more bearable.

My cell was always spotlessly clean; the guards took particular pride in this.

It was thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned daily by the two houseboys of the division.

By giving them the bulk of my prison rations, I was able to reward them for their services. 234 From time to time, the prison doctor, Medical Director Dr.

Geisendörfer, briefly dispelling the dreary solitude.

We only came into contact with the other prisoners at Stadelheim when we were led through the

corridors and courtyards of the institution to the visiting room for interrogations or visits.

Occasionally, groups of prisoners were also led through the courtyard while we had our afternoon fresh air breaks.

Every now and then, a head would peek out from the skylights of the barred windows, calling out friendly greetings or waving to us.

In fact, we never heard a single unfriendly word or saw a single hostile expression, even though we belonged to the “notorious East German officer caste”—which, as is well known, is the enemy of the “working” people—and, on top of that, wore uniforms, medals, and black-white-red cockades on display.

On the contrary, our “comrades” showed us proper respect and a certain goodwill.

The bond of a shared fate does indeed foster a solidarity that endured even under strange and unusual circumstances, triumphing over custom and tradition.

I had ample time and opportunity to observe the prisoners and form an opinion about these outcasts of society.

Now, for the most part, only remand prisoners and those convicted prisoners who had short prison sentences to serve were held here in Stadelheim.

But the insights that could be gained here were no less remarkable for that.

In most cases, property offenses had landed the people in prison.

Many who had turned to crime out of necessity; some whom a flawed or inadequate upbringing, mistreatment, or impulsive tendencies had led down paths that brought them into conflict with the criminal code.

The little ones sat, while the big scoundrels roamed freely throughout Germany, plundering the people and the state treasury, and drove through the streets like lords in 60-horse-power automobiles.

Is it any wonder if a poor devil confuses what is mine and what is yours, when he has to watch as nouveau riche show-offs, in full view of the people’s distress, shamelessly squander money and goods that they have extorted and stolen from the people?

Not everyone condemned by the rigid judicial system is necessarily a bad person.

Civil society and state law do not ostracize notorious scoundrels and public pests; their wealth, however dubious its origin, grants them status and prestige.

But the petty scoundrels who have stumbled once, been caught, and—in my view, quite rightly—imprisoned, are ostracized and considered the outcasts of society.

Society denies them honor, work, and bread.

They are inevitably forced to return again and again to the only refuge available to them: prison.

But here, too, the state merely combats the effect without eliminating the causes. 235 When crime and offenses increase as a result of poverty, misery, and unemployment, it does not focus on alleviating the hardships with all available means and with the full power of the state, but rather increases the police and prisons; and the police are the henchmen of today's social and legal order.

But the state does not ask about ability, worth, or achievement; appearances decide everything.

Whether someone is a scoundrel or a coward is not what matters; as long as they do not get caught in the snares of the law and no "scandal" occurs, everything is fine.

Hypocrisy and self-righteousness reign.

They are the most striking feature of today's society.

This is most evident when one examines the prevailing "morality."

Nothing is more hypocritical than this so-called morality of society; with a subtle pretense, even more mischief is run.

I state from the outset that I do not belong to the virtuous and have no ambition to join their ranks; but I certainly do not wish to count myself among the "moral," for I have found that the "morality" of these "moral" people is usually not all that great.

Amidst all this "morality," one can no longer tell what is what. But precisely those who outwardly drip with morality either secretly quite enjoy being immoral or would be so, oh, so gladly, if only they found the opportunity.

I leave it open to debate whether a courtesan who openly professes her trade is not morally superior to many a moral aesthete who denies their true nature to the outside world.

When even the so-called statesmen, leaders of the people, etc.

put on a show of morality, it is usually proof that they can't think of anything better to do, and that they are incapable of accomplishing what they are actually supposed to do.

I do not like the fact that nationalist circles, the nationalist press, and nationalist leaders also blow into this hackneyed horn of woe in order to kowtow to society.

This prudishness certainly does not strike me as nevolutionary, but rather as insipid and reactionary to the point of nausea.

They should leave this lament to the critics of today's bourgeois social order.

Among a certain sort of "nationalist" literati, most of whom were not in the field and "experienced" the war from the safety of their homes, this is, of course, hardly surprising.

The war for "culture" and "morals" is, after all, far more comfortable and less dangerous than the man-

killing battlefield, where—at times—one must also take aim.

Besides, it looks so good!

The soldier turns away from this kind of false morality with disgust.

In the field, I did not judge the soldier by whether he met the moral requirements of bourgeois society, but by whether he was a man or not.

I can't help it, but I prefer a so-called immoral person who accomplishes something to a "moral" one who accomplishes nothing.

In no matter does so-called society sin more and cause greater harm than in this very one.

The suicides of the best speak a language that is all too clear.

If, indeed, this society of "patented morality" is startled from its complacent slumber by the increasing number of student suicides, then it scolds, with a pious look in its eyes, the moral decay of today's youth.

A word must also be said about this.

And quite briefly: it is simply not true that the majority of youth, the

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especially the proletarian masses today, is worse than in the past.

No: despite the aftermath of the war, despite the misery of food and housing, despite forced unemployment—all things for which this society, and not the youth, is to blame—this youth has its high ideals and stands up for them joyfully and boldly.

The youth organizations in the N.

S.

D.

A.

P., in the military associations, and also in the proletarian self-defense associations bear witness to this.

What these young people cannot do is something else: they cannot find their way through the double standards of the bourgeois philistines and are no longer able to distinguish between truth and error.

Rarely do they have a teacher at their side who opens up not only knowledge and wisdom, but also the heart to them.

The rusty schoolmaster, however, will confine himself to lulling the attentive philistine back to sleep

after misfortune has struck, through his finely unctuous and infallible judgment on a “corrupted youth” whom he neither knows nor understands.

In truth, these tragedies are the terrible result of a social order that, instead of healthy recognition of natural processes and insights, prescribes hypocrisy, lies, pretense, prudishness, and misplaced indignation.

These Pharisees have truly not felt a single breath of the courage of honesty and truthfulness!

If the state even claims the right for itself and believes it can regulate human instincts or steer them in other directions through laws, this strikes me as so amateurish and counterproductive that I would be surprised if the legislators of this state were not the guardians of this social order.

For the notion that state intervention in human nature will protect the family or lead to more children is an argument that not even the night watchmen of this peculiar “Free State” would adopt. “Madness, madness, madness everywhere!” to quote Richard Wagner’s Hans Sachs!

My point is this: The struggle against the hypocrisy, deceit, and sanctimoniousness of today’s society must spring from the most fundamental, innate instincts with which man is born; only then can it be successfully waged throughout all of human life.

If the struggle in this area is successful, then the mask of pretense can be torn down in all areas of human society and the legal order.

But then, many of those ostracized by today’s society will no longer be sitting in prisons; certainly, however, ways and means will have been found to prevent the true and great pests of human society from carrying out their people-destroying activities.

Before the gates of the court, which will one day be presided over by a purified soul, all those who have erred will be held accountable, without regard to person.

Relentless vengeance will strike both the highest and the lowest.

A Barmat will surely and swiftly receive the punishment he deserves here; even the name Scheidemann will no longer suffice to evade testimony before the judge.

One more word on imprisonment in general: Legal scholars are not all of one mind on this question; as a layman, I can only make the following observation: Offenses of convenience and necessity land people in prison for the first time; there they meet habitual criminals and truly come to know this world.

Thus, imprisonment becomes a school for the rabble.

That German law is in need of reform is beyond question.

It is still too constrained by the shackles of Roman law. “Laws and rights are passed down like an eternal disease; reason becomes nonsense, a blessing a plague!” One cannot deny that views on legal concepts are quite diverse at present.

The newspaper of the world's Jews living in Germany, who, as is well known, are also German citizens under the Reich Constitution, writes, for

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following the conclusion of the Barmat trial ("Frankfurter Zeitung" of April 3, 1928, No. 252): "This is the fine result of the trial: the German judges have proven themselves!

Justice has been served." Whether the entire German people, insofar as they have retained their own judgment, share this opinion, I will leave open for the time being.

As a German member of the Reichstag once wrote: "Street justice has become the handmaiden of politics." The law before which every German is equal, the justice that grants equal protection to the poor and the rich, to the highest and the lowest—that is the demand a people can make who, as a whole, have heroically weathered the greatest war in world history.

Whether the newly revised Penal Code for the German Reich will do justice to this demand remains to be seen.

This body of law is intended to serve as the guiding principle for the fundamental principles of life in the state community as a whole and thus strikes at the very heart of the people.

It is therefore disheartening to see that broad sections of the population remain indifferent to this work. 238 Significantly, the German Reichstag has entrusted the lead drafting to the constitutional law professor Dr.

Kahl, the typical representative of a generation that is certainly honorable but has grown old—and, of course, a Privy Councilor.

Given the helplessness, aimlessness, and inner self-righteousness of the bourgeoisie, which is mired in class spirit and social snobbery, it is hardly surprising that, both within and outside the people's representation, it is almost exclusively Marxists who are stepping forward to meet the demands of a new era.

I fear, however, that the experience and legacy of the Front will not find sufficient expression in the new legal provisions.

Thus, in the realm of jurisprudence and social order as well, great tasks lie ahead for the future Reich of the German people.

A new order of things awaits its awakening, one that draws its sources from the customs and traditions of our Aryan forefathers and takes into account both the uplifting and revolutionary experience of the Front and the insights of a new era, of a socially free, truly proud young generation.

There were also some political prisoners in Stadelheim during my time there.

National Socialists who had been sentenced to severe prison terms for some clash; communists were also held here.

I greatly admired the loyalty and devotion of these mostly young men, who had sacrificed their freedom for their convictions.

The spirit of sacrifice with which these radical movements fight must command the respect even of those with differing political views.

They must take comfort in this: Pioneers and innovators have always been imprisoned.

Small minds are never revolutionaries, but passionate people have always been rebels.

The fact that National Socialists and Communists were treated the same way in this regard may well have been painful for some and also prompted scornful remarks in the conservative press.

But perhaps there was some good in it after all.

Much separates us from the Communists, but we respect them, and what unites us with them is their unwavering loyalty to their convictions and their willingness to make sacrifices for their own cause.

And that is German, and there is something German about the Communists as well, no matter how much one may otherwise scold them.

The hatred of mediocrity, d.

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in political life against philistinism and compromise, and the struggle against reaction are sentiments and goals common to radical movements.

And, dear philistine, don’t faint just yet!

For I maintain that among the communists, especially among the members of the Red Front Fighters’ League, there are many excellent soldiers.

In any case, as a soldier, I prefer their activist attitude to that of the Reichsbanner, which is bound by parliamentary constraints.

The day will come when these soldiers in their work clothes will recognize the deception and deceit of their Jewish leadership, or of the leadership dependent on the Jews.

Then they will—sooner and with greater instinctive certainty than the philistine—find the path to which their German blood points them.

Need I remind you of the three young communists who took their own lives in December 1927 because they saw their ideals go unfulfilled?

A particular legal aberration has emerged in many political convictions.

The defendants are sentenced to heavy fines.

Of course, they cannot pay these, since they have sacrificed their last penny to the fatherland and their cause.

While the rich feast outside, laughing scornfully, the poor devils in prison can reflect on the fact that they no longer possess anything—and why.

Even the preliminary proceedings in such cases require special scrutiny.

At the end of March 1925, the trial took place against my comrade-in-arms and former colleague Mar Neunzert, which ended with his acquittal.

Like him, Hans Schweigbart and Richard Ballo had been held in pretrial detention for months on charges of treason, where I was able to visit all three repeatedly and earn their respect for their resolute will, which could not be broken by their imprisonment.

These deprivations of liberty in cases of political charges are quite disturbing.

The good citizen who drinks his pint in the evening has no idea what it means for a mentally agile and strong-willed person to spend weeks and months behind prison walls in a locked cell.

And he gives no thought to the fact that not only hundreds of communists, who have fought fearlessly for their convictions, but also hardly fewer nationalists, men

with an irrepressible will to act, are forced to languish in the prisons of the Republic.

They are accused and must then prove their innocence; until then, the Republic simply locks them up as a precaution.

As examples of this peculiar legal procedure, which above all requires a fundamental change, the cases of Neunzert and Schweigbart mentioned here are particularly telling.

Neunzert spent 10 months, Schweighart over 2 years (776 days) in pretrial detention; both lost their livelihoods and careers.

In the court proceedings, they were acquitted, and the cases were dismissed for lack of evidence.

Perhaps the complacent, narrow-minded bourgeoisie, and perhaps even the “nationalists,” will one day reflect on these terrible figures and facts.

Then it will dawn on them, too, that it is not easy to be a nationalist in Germany.

It is unreasonable to expect that the deprivation of liberty will have a reforming or instructive effect on these prisoners.

Rather, it intensifies feelings of resentment and dissatisfaction into hatred and a desire for revenge.

Even “high traitors” have time to develop their trains of thought—I speak from experience! 240 And in Stadelheim I certainly had plenty of time to think!

Once my initial anger at being locked up had subsided, I calmed myself with the thought: Oxen aren't usually locked up in prisons; they can be let loose without danger.

Nothing in my life would have been more repugnant to me than being regarded as stupid; so I still preferred that to being regarded and treated as a dangerous felon.

I first wanted to hire as my lawyer my comrade-in-arms from the Imperial War Flags, Dr.

Schramm, who was of the same mind as I and did everything in his power to make my time in prison more bearable.

He went so far in this devotion that he soon became a suspect to the authorities himself and was to be imprisoned.

His father, Justice Councilor Dr.

Schramm, then took over my defense.

A noble-minded, refined man of great knowledge and skill.

His calm, thoughtful manner was a valuable complement to my exuberant temperament.

I was interrogated by a public prosecutor, Dr.

Müller, whose efforts to elicit as much as possible from me through kindness and goodwill were met with only moderate success.

At any rate, I did not hesitate to provide him with answers to some questions, insofar as I deemed it necessary and appropriate.

On the other hand, I had declared from the outset that I would refuse to answer any questions at all posed by the prosecutor Dresse, the special "patron" of the Völkisch Movement.

Instead, Dresse had the unenviable privilege of "interrogating" the remand prisoner Pöhner.

Just as Pöhner, himself a long-serving investigating judge, saw fit to conduct these "interrogations."

The prosecutors were primarily interested in what "the state" deemed necessary to learn.

Some matters that seemed far more significant to us—namely, those involving the participation of the so-called "state" itself, i.e.,

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Ritter von Kahr and his comrades in our enterprise, they were reluctant to acknowledge.

A veritable hunt for the elderly was carried out.

A great deal was found.

The old documents, however, which were particularly important to us and would therefore have been of special interest to the prosecutor, could not be located.

They remained safely stored in an iron cabinet at the military district headquarters until they were burned.

Needless to say, General von Lossow and his chief of staff were not informed of this.

I initially used the ample time at my disposal to draft complaints, which, however, and naturally, remained entirely unsuccessful.

On November 21, 1923, I wrote to the Higher Regional Court and

A.: “For the reasons cited, neither the continuation of solitary confinement nor the continued detention seems to me to be warranted, and I request that my release be ordered under the conditions deemed necessary by the court.

I must, however, add a consideration to this, regarding which I consider myself both entitled and obligated to bring it to the attention of the Supreme Court.

If the risk of tampering with evidence is cited as grounds for detention, then justice demands that Messrs. von Kahr, von Lossow, and von Seisser be detained in the same manner, or

have been placed in custody immediately.

The legal principle of “equal justice for all” must not stop at these individuals.

The value judgment regarding the conduct of these individuals as such is not at issue here.

The issue here is merely that there is a body of evidence indicating that the aforementioned individuals were originally involved in Hitler’s movement.

It takes a great deal of naivety to accept the subsequent assertions of these gentlemen—whose credibility the events of September 8, 1923, provide sufficient reason to doubt—as true and credible without further ado, and to refrain from the necessary scrutiny.

In any case, I perceive in the treatment of these gentlemen a different standard than that applied to me and my friends, and must regard this, unless the contrary is conclusively proven to me, as a perversion of justice unprecedented in my experience.

As a German, I demand, in accordance with the law, the same rights that are granted to Mr. von Kahr and his comrades.

I must now raise the fundamental question of whether there is still a common German law at all, or which law is applicable, or

who determines the law on German soil.

I believe that, as a German citizen, I am entitled to a clear answer to this question.

The following facts may shed light on the legitimacy of this question: 1.

Mr. von Kahr has suspended the validity of the Republic Protection Act for Bavaria.

Thus, a Reich law does not apply in Bavaria.

Does the Reich Constitution no longer have legal force? 7.

Division, the Bavarian government has nevertheless left him in that position, appointed him commander of the province, and committed the 7th Division to Bavaria.

Is this now a breach of the new constitution or not?

Does the Reich government in Berlin have absolutely no say in the matter anymore?

Or has Bavaria already severed itself from the Reich?

J.

Does the Bavarian government wish to deny that it was aware of Ehrhardt's troop concentrations in Bamberg and Coburg, and supported them with money and through the state police with water?

I am merely selecting these three facts at random to demonstrate that there is currently no clear legal situation in Bavaria.

I must therefore be allowed to ask the clear question of whether the German court to which I am being referred for judgment is in a position to judge completely freely and independently, or whether it has received suggestions and instructions from the current General State Commissioner or is in any way dependent on him or the Bavarian government.

Furthermore, I must once again pose the very clear question of whether Messrs. von Kahr, von Lossow, and von Selsser are likewise subject to the examination and judgment of the same court, or

Only if these conditions are met can I, as a German citizen whose entire life has hitherto been devoted solely to the German fatherland, grant a court the right to judge guilt and punishment.

I request a written reply." The complaint was not granted.

At the end of November, I celebrated my birthday in prison.

Of all 242 2.

From those who had left, I received letters and gifts from General von Lossow as commander of the troops, and above all from my brave soldiers, which gave me great joy.

Numerous visits brought a joyful change to my quiet life.

I was particularly honored and pleased that my esteemed regimental commander, His Excellency von Kiefhaber, and the high-minded Privy Councilor Dr.

Count du Moulin-Eckart chose to visit me.

My noble father spared no effort, regardless of weather or distance, to keep me company for a brief ten minutes as often as possible and to bring me gifts.

He took turns with my mother, who was always eager to bring me some joy.

My dear sister-in-law Anneliese, who did everything in her power to make my situation easier, was just as devoted as my most loyal sister, who had traveled all the way from Salzburg to Munich just to spend a few minutes with me.

The good-hearted restaurant owner Simon sent a fine bottle of wine from time to time; my childhood friends Lisl Schneider and Paula Schneller thoughtfully showered me with kind gifts.

The upright editor of the “Fränk.

Kurier,” Dr.

Hohenstatter, often brought us large gift boxes of Nuremberg gingerbread.

My friend Karl Zehnter, the owner of the famous “Nürnberger Bratwurstglöckl” on Frauenplatz, also once sent me and my comrades a generous shipment of sausages, which we devoured with great relish.

Thanks to these gifts from my parents and friends, I was able to manage my meals in such a way that I could almost entirely avoid the monotonous prison fare.

Two good comrades, the splendid Weismann, owner of a barbershop on Leopoldstraße, and my faithful Stegmann, did not miss the opportunity to provide thoughtful gifts to help me look my best in prison.

The discharge from military service I requested on September 26, 1923, was granted on December 16, 1923, effective November 16, 1923.

On December 20,

I was transferred to Neudeck with Hühnlein, Streck, and Weber.

Supposedly, so we could receive visitors more easily at Christmas; but in reality, to spare the district attorney the long journey to Stadelheim.

Since we had quietly expected to be released, my anger knew no bounds when Chief Administrator Bauer, the prison warden, gave us a sanctimonious speech to welcome us within his walls.

I vented my rage on Bauer and the prosecutor to my heart’s content and gave the good civil servant a hard time.

Admittedly, the conditions at Neudeck were nothing like those at Stadelheim.

So I sat down immediately and wrote the following complaint to the People's Court: "I was transferred today from Stadelheim to Neudeck.

I have now been in custody for six weeks, as I was informed, due to a 16% risk of absconding.

I will set aside the fact—which is, to my knowledge, unique in legal history—that I have now been held in undignified detention for six weeks, while, for example, General von Lossow is still at liberty. However, I can at least demand that I not be locked up in a cramped, foul-smelling cell, but rather be held in dignified detention.

I therefore ask the People's Court to expedite the arrangement of alternative accommodation so that I am not expected to spend the Christmas holidays in such a distressing manner." At the same time, I requested the public prosecutor to arrange my return to Stadel-bei.

Since the chief administrator was glad to get rid of me, I was taken back to Stadelheim as early as the morning of the 22nd.

Morning.

Hühnlein and Weber followed me shortly thereafter, while Stred preferred to stay in Neudeck.

In the prison yard in Neudeck, I was able to briefly greet Pöhner, Frick, and 33 others, who were spending their time there undaunted and undeterred.

The many gifts that came to me from all sides for Christmas were touching and uplifting.

Anyone who has not experienced prison life—these days it is actually considered good form to have been locked up at least once—cannot even imagine the joy that even the smallest memento brings to a prisoner.

I was happy.

The affection and love of my comrades-in-arms and friends made Christmas in Stadelheim wonderfully beautiful for me: in my cell I had set up a large table of gifts, which was filled with beautiful and good things, with everything the heart desires.

So I soon calmed myself again regarding the episode in Neudeck and composed this epic in its memory: The Epic of Neudeck.

Run for me, Mufe, the day that was held captive within Neudeck's walls, led swiftly and surely from Etabelheim's lovely fields, a little cart guarded by two guardians of the law and two more of the same.

But thus spoke the most green-robed dictator with gravity: "Truly, it does not seem good to me to leave this place now, where I ruled you noble men with wisdom and power!" To this, Doctor Weber replied thoughtfully: "Much do I always know, and this time too I can proclaim: shunning weather and wind and the painfully rugged paths, the state's advocate has summoned us with wise deliberation to provide information to the inquiring mouths of Müller and Dresse." "I speak these words reluctantly and would keep them to myself, but now I cannot: they shall...

A.

A.

Me," the guide sitting next to "Flägglein" emphasized with resentment. "Objectively, I agree with him," said the Bole of the Rabi and Nazl'.

He did not continue, for the carriage had arrived at its destination.

Busy servants immediately led the men into the rooms, which had been quite sensibly chosen for the front-line soldiers: 7 7 sweetly scented, dark, and cramped, just as they once were in Flanders!

Notes: In prison, we recognized Mafor Hühnlein as our "dictator"; during his imprisonment, he often wore a green woolen cap, the Reich war flag.

Streck (National Socialist). 244 In the morning, the chief administrator greeted the guests jovially: "Whatever is available in the kitchen and the house, he would gladly provide; for he stands close to our party," and as he spoke, he puffed out his chest, "But let us be clear: for the official, nothing matters but the regulations." "No, that's a scandal," shouted Number One Hundred and Sixty, "This place is too cramped for me, and on top of that, it's disgusting!" Pale and trembling, the chief administrator replied: "I will not let you take away the pride of my existence; woe to you for daring to refuse this sacred dwelling!" Wisely and thoughtfully, the dictator replied: "Far be it from us to shamefully water you, masters; let us return to Stadelheim's lovely fields!" he boasted.

And Zeus heard him and spoke these winged words: "Good.

So be it: Let the gates of Neudeck be opened!" This may be proof that I have not lost my sense of humor and that I did not spend nine years of a humanities education in vain.

With my friends, who spent Christmas with me in Stadelheim, I exchanged small gifts, to which I added the following aphorisms: To Major Hühnlein: "It is not the colorful uniform that elevates the soldier in the state; only honor alone guarantees him the privilege of the sword." To Dr.

Weber: "The eagle in flight scorns dwarves and the brood of otters; let them screech and revile, he wins the nest with radiance." To Lieutenant Wagner: "When the Philistine's pitiful state shatters into shards, German youth, come forth!

You alone will save the whole." To Haug, Hitler's driver, a true German man of substance and the purest conviction: "Remain faithful, as before, to the Führer and friend Adolf Hitler; the violence of cowardly wimps only brings us a more glorious victory!" ' For the sake of completeness, and at the request of my friends, I am including here a few serious and humorous writings that I composed during those days in Stadelheim. 1.

To Mr. Adolf Hühnlein in loyalty, gratitude, and friendship.

Stadelheim, Dec. 27, 1923.

The Black-White-Red Cockade.

For five years it stood firm against the enemy, The black-white-red cockade, For five years it flew high in enemy land, The German banner of victory.

November traitors betrayed the Reich, The victorious colors sank, November cowards abandoned them at once, Betraying those who died for them.

Five years the best in misery and need!

In spite of toiling and cowardly bastards, The prisoners are often identified by their cell number.

United in battle, loyal unto death, Under black-white-red cockades!

And once again the November storm rages, yes, do you still want to wait?

Let the battle bells ring from tower to tower, Out! Black-white-red cockades!

But while the faithful ponder, the wicked plot treachery: Haha, how we have fooled you fools!

If you walk unsuspectingly through the jubilant city, Then death to you, black-white-red cockades!

Betrayal has shattered the most faithful's faith, The colors lie scattered on the ground, Deceit and pretense brazenly triumph— May the wounds never heal!

Call us to bloody vengeance, Those who rally around the German banner: We swear you vengeance, count on it And then hail, black-white-red cockades! 2.

To a German!

You, Dietrich Eckart, I can no longer greet in freedom, You left us and left us behind In the struggle we continue to fight.

For Germany's victory and Germany's proud fortune.

You were our standard-bearer in the fierce battle, You showed us the enemy's ambush, You too fell as a fighter on our side, Your struggle is over, the poet's mouth is silent Yet what you taught us, that We have not forgotten, Your faithful legacy is our pledge, Though you are dead, your spirit leads us instead To victory in the German fatherland.

But listen, you guilty comrades, We demand accountability for him as well, just as for his twenty-one comrades, Whom your bullets have struck down.

Perjury and deceit shall sink.

The day of vengeance is coming; beware, you who taught us to shout! 1 The battle cry rings out: "Germany, awaken!" Death to treason and hail to the German sword!

In memory of our dear comrade Dietrich Eckart.

Stadelheim, January 1, 1924.

From a decree on the “Maintenance of Peace and Order in St.

Adelhelm,” the following section is reproduced: Legion of High Traitors.

St.

Adelheim No. 474.

To the High Command of the Dictatorship £ (c/o

H.

L.

Dictator I No. 304 op.) 3 H.

By Mr. Adolf Fürchtekahr Hühnlein. 246 copies.

Adelheim, January 6, 1924.

Subject: Prison regulations.

L.

Preliminary Remarks. 1.

High traitors are divided into three classes: a) ordinary high traitors, b) extraordinary high traitors, c) high traitors on probation. 2.

High traitors in category e owe respect and obedience to high traitors in categories a and b; high traitors in category b owe respect and obedience to high traitors in category a.

For expressions of respect, the “Regulations on Expressions of Respect for the Royal

Army” applies to expressions of honor; for general conduct: “Etiquette for Dealing with High Traitors.” 3.

In the event of unsatisfactory probation, demotion to Class b or

C.

Physical activity. 4.

Physical activity is generally limited to eating and drinking.

As a guideline, up to two glasses of beer are generally permitted (high traitors on probation only one glass). Within these limits, high traitors of all classes may get drunk starting at 8:00 p.m. 5.

Meals are served in plain, simple dishes.

Moderation is advised when eating.

The complete consumption of the “lunge” served on Tuesday may be imposed as a punitive measure. 6.

When moving about outdoors, disruptive running about is prohibited.

Childish games are incompatible with the dignity of high traitors.

M.

Intellectual activity. 7.

The cultivation and maintenance of a clear and focused mind must be vigorously pursued.

Intellectual beverages may be used to this end with benefit.

Thinking organs that suffer damage from repeated reading of the “Münchner Neueste Nachrichten” are to be delivered to the repair workshops.

IV.

Moral conduct.

Unfortunately, this section cannot be reproduced.

Regarding the second poem, I must add by way of explanation: Dietrich Eckart, the great German poet, whose works may only be fully understood and appreciated for their value in later times, had, despite his alarming condition, been criminally denied his freedom.

When the day of his release finally came, it was too late: a few days later, he succumbed to his debilitating illness.

On December 26,

December 1923, he was laid to rest in Berchtesgaden.

Lieutenant Wagner arrived in Stadelheim on Christmas Day.

The fresh, enthusiastic young officer had, on November 9,

As leaders of the Infantry School, the commissioned officers distinguished themselves particularly. 247 Hühnlein left us on January 21

January and transferred to Landsberg via We all missed him very much.

Among the visitors who came to see me were also many former non-commissioned officers and

enlisted men, whose devotion did me particular good.

I was also very pleased by the visit of Pastor Kreppel from Christuskirche, this truly German pastor.

In February, Lieutenant Wagner left us again; he was discharged.

In his place, Oßwald and later Heines and Feichtmayr arrived.

In the last days of February, I was able to spend a few hours a day with Heines.

On February 25, 1924, the felons J.

Garnitur were transferred to the Infantry School for trial. 29.

Reflections in Prison In any case, my stay in Stadelheim had one positive aspect.

After the turmoil of the past weeks, I had the time and opportunity to come to terms with myself, to reflect on the past, and to consider the future.

The reflections I made were not free from the state of mind that had moved me at the time, immediately after November 9,

November 1925.

My mood was carried, on the one hand, by deep bitterness over the betrayal, hatred, and a desire for revenge against the traitors, but on the other hand by full confidence in the ultimate success of the national movement.

Today, as I write down these memories, four years have passed.

Now I view things more calmly and soberly; I have gained insight into certain circumstances that provide a key to the behavior of some individuals on the opposing side, explaining it, if not excusing it.

Everything in the world has a meaning and a purpose.

So it must surely be that, when Germany lies bound to the ground, even those who wish to serve her most faithfully must sacrifice freedom and life.

And Mr. von Kahr may well have been a tool of that power which always wills the good and yet brings about the evil.

One thing, at any rate, is beyond question: any consideration of whether it was good or bad that it came to pass on November 8,

November 1923; it was bound to happen.

From a memorandum on the events of November 8–9,

November, which I submitted to the court on November 17, 1923, I have drawn the following remarks,

which most vividly reflect my position at the time: “Whether on November 9,

November 1923, Adolf Hitler’s attempt—suppressed by Mr. von Sal! with guns—to bring salvation to the people in their greatest distress through a liberating act, was beneficial or harmful to our enslaved fatherland, history alone will one day pass its eternally unwavering judgment.

It was not this that Adolf Hitler, the ardent champion of German freedom, intended to put into practice.

Thus, the measure for judging whether his undertaking would have brought about Germany’s resurgence is lacking.

A liberating act, if it succeeds, is the highest patriotic merit; if it fails—high treason!

It can be left to the journalists to pass judgment even now, including the self-proclaimed “prudent patriots,” who are so convinced of the weight of their words that they would consider it a sacrilege to remain silent on such occasions.

After all, they all have reason to fear opposition at present; the press of the nationalist movement is suppressed, and the other newspapers are permitted to publish only what is approved by the government.

The leaders of the freedom movement have been silenced behind prison walls.

The truth will come to light here as well—despite all this—but the court, which will very soon have to decide on right and wrong, must first investigate the sources to seek and find what is right, both in form and in morality.

It must place emphasis on hearing those who cannot speak for themselves today.

The following remarks are to be made available to this quest for justice as an objective statement by one of the accused.” After describing the events, as I have already recounted them elsewhere, I concluded my statement: “I see only one thing, and in the silence of the prison walls I have come to a thorough understanding of it: In a time of the fatherland’s greatest need, the best and most upright, followed by the finest sons of our people, undertook an attempt—out of burning love for their fatherland—to pave the way for Germany’s liberation and salvation through an act that the entire people had been crying out for.

This attempt was brutally crushed with machine guns through deceit and treachery by the forces that have now, for five years, proven themselves incapable of leading us out of our misery; the leaders of the freedom movement have been thrown into prison.

I see honesty, blind trust in integrity and loyalty, selfless, burning love of country in conflict with indecision, broken promises, deceit, and betrayal.

“And now may the court before God and the people render its verdict!” But regarding the “Savior of the Fatherland,” I indulged in the following reflections, which I recorded on November 21, 1923.

I had to delete some passages, however, out of due respect for the Republic Protection Act.

The Savior of the Fatherland.

All newspapers proclaim in every key that Kahr saved the fatherland by suppressing the “Hitler Putsch.”

This is simply stated, and therefore it is so.

The bourgeoisie is in a hurry to express its respect and gratitude for the national feat in all appropriate and inappropriate places.

In contrast, let us take a sober look at things and stick to the facts at hand.

How did Hitler’s coup come about? 1.

The November Revolution of 1918 denied victory to the victorious German army and brought about the collapse of Germany. _ Does any German man doubt this?

Yes or no?

Did any Reich government, did the Kahr government, do anything against the instigators of the uprising? 249 Alfo: The November heroes are completely unpunished; the highest state offices in Germany are held by men who instigated the uprising. And: Mr. von Kahr has done nothing against it and will do nothing against it. 2.

Germany is not to blame for the revolution.

Does any German man doubt that? Or no?

Has any Reich government or the Kahr administration ever publicly stated that it is not Germany, but the Entente—and specifically

is to blame for the war?

It is always claimed that clarifying the question of guilt is the most important thing. Has any action now been taken against the signatories of the shameful Treaty of Versailles, which is based on the question of guilt?

In other words: the peace treaty and the lie of guilt remain in force to this day.

The signatories have not yet been held accountable.

And: Mr. von Kahr has done nothing about it and will do nothing about it. 3.

In addition to the territories stolen in the “Peace” of Versailles, we have lost Upper Silesia, the Rhine, the Ruhr, and the Palatinate.

Will we regain them through talk or through battle?

Answer, German man, yes or no?

Has any imperial government or the Kahr government prepared for this necessary struggle? Have not the fighters of Upper Silesia, the fighters on the Rhine and the Ruhr, been abandoned, betrayed, and imprisoned in gratitude for their deeds?

Thus: German land is being betrayed and abandoned with impunity.

The struggle for recovery is not being prepared; German fighters are being deceived and imprisoned.

And: Herr von Kahr has done nothing about it and will do nothing about it. 4.

As a natural consequence of the “peace” and the policy of appeasement, a terrible hardship has befallen our people.

A large, and by no means the least fortunate, portion of the people is starving.

In addition to the—predictable—shortage of goods, the main blame lies with the Federal Bank, which has artificially brought about the currency crisis.

Is that so, German man, or not?

Did any Reich government or the Kahr government take timely measures to combat the expected hardship?

Have the causes of this distress been dealt with ruthlessly?

Will hardship and hunger prevail?

Has provision been made so that no one goes hungry or freezes?

No, millions are starving and will freeze this coming winter.

In short: Nothing has been done to address the impending hardship of the people; nothing has been prepared; no decisive action has been taken.

And: Mr. von Kahr has done nothing about it and will do nothing about it. 5.

A concomitant of the hardship is unemployment.

It was just as predictable and calculable as the economic hardship.

But it is, after all, the German worker who is being driven into hardship and deprivation.

Have you heard anything about this, German, yes or no?

Has any legal regulation or has the Kahr government taken any subsequent measures to remedy unemployment?

In his work *Warfare and Politics*, Ludendorff described it as a misfortune that no effort was made to

win over the workers for the nation.

Has any government, in particular that of Mr. von Kahr, undertaken to make amends for this misfortune?

Were we not content to gauge the mood of the working class solely through the reports of government and ministerial advisors?

Did they not simply drive the workers into the hands of the Marxist and Jewish leaders, since they had not taken it upon themselves to do so? Instead of standing shoulder to shoulder with us.

Who fought and bled, and was truly no worse than any other class, to stand by us, to care for him, and to be his most loyal brother and friend?

And will we now remember our German duty, or will we finally abandon him to misery, despair, incitement, and ruin?

So: The unemployment that was bound to come is here.

Hundreds, indeed thousands, of honest workers face the bitterest hardship, and the cold winter is at the door.

And: Mr. von Kahr has done nothing about it and will do nothing about it. 6.

In the face of hardship, misery, and unemployment, profiteers, stock market speculators, swindlers, usurers, and hoarders are unchecked. With shamelessness, they feast and revel in public establishments.

The pad, which has stolen the money from the struggling people, is allowed to behave provocatively on the street and in public.

The property of Germans—houses, farms, estates, and businesses—which they can no longer maintain, passes into their possession.

Apart from the Germans themselves, there are mainly Jews from all over the world and foreigners who are happily taking over German property.

Is that right, Germans, or not?

Has any Reich government or the Kahr government, to remedy these terrible abuses, not only made speeches or announced measures,

Has anyone actually done anything practical?

Has even one usurer been hanged?

In short: Practically nothing has been done against the people’s bloodsuckers and swindlers.

And: Mr. von Kahr has done nothing about it and will do nothing about it. “That the Jewish people bear enormous blame for the disintegration and collapse of Germany—no German today doubts that.

That the Jews have held an extraordinary position of power in Germany since the revolution and, together with their compatriots outside the country, are bleeding the German people dry and oppressing them, is also a fact.

Or do you doubt this, German?

Has any Reich government or the Kahr government taken decisive measures to free Germany from Jewish power and hold the guilty Jews accountable?

This is not a matter of the expulsion of a few Jews, which Mr. von Kahr once ordered but then revoked, but rather of ridding Germany of Jewish domination.

The Jews in Cape Town are the danger, not the Jews in Germany! fo: Nothing stands in the way of breaking Jewish dominance. .

Mr. von Kahr has done nothing about it and will do nothing about it. “The international, pacifist plague, primarily implanted and nurtured by the Jews, has become a terrible national disease.

If we do not succeed in eradicating this disease, Germany cannot rise again.

Do you share this view, German?

Has any Reich government or the Kahr government set the complete eradication of the international, Marxist, and pacifist idea as its goal?

Has the rabble of leaders who spread this poison among our people, especially among our hardworking class, been rendered harmless?

Are such activities in this direction suppressed in deed, word, or writing?

In the Reich, however, nothing is currently being done about this; in Bavaria, Mr. von Kahr has, on paper, the E s.

A.

And a few days ago, the “Münchener Post” was banned.

Is this grave danger averted by such means?

Can worldviews and world powers be crushed in this way?

In short: Internationalism, Marxism, and pacifism are allowed to spew their deadly poison unhindered in Germany.

And: Mr. von Kahr has done nothing, practically nothing, to oppose this and will do nothing to oppose it.

These are just some of the vital questions that concern True Germany today—and within it, German

Bavaria—and everywhere the answer to the question: What has happened, what will happen?

Nothing!

What has happened instead?

The effect of the Press Protection Act on Bavaria has been nullified.

Thus, a different law applies in the Reich than in Bavaria.

What has happened to force the Reich to repeal this exceptional law as well?

General von Lossow, who was dismissed by the Reich government, has been appointed by the Bavarian government as Bavarian provincial commander, and the Bavarian troops have been placed under the command of the Bavarian government.

So, where do we live?

Are we still living in Germany, or has Bavaria already declared its independence?

The Reich Constitution has ceased to exist, after all.

Say or order anything more.

Fine, agreed!

But which Reich government will be recognized then, which constitution will apply?

For Bavaria wants to “solve the German question,” as Mr. von Kahr said. “Off to Berlin,” he had it declared!

And: “The Reich must remain ours,” the level-headed Bavarians wail at every opportunity!

It is truly not a matter of Bavaria, but all of Germany must be saved.

We must not abandon our fellow countrymen in the north, south, west, and east, especially now in their greatest hour of need!

We must not fight for narrow-minded local interests, but for our great, glorious, black-white-red Germany.

Everything calls for action. “Things cannot go on like this,” “Something must be done,” cries the voice of the entire people, who, filled with horror, feel the terrible distress and see no salvation, but only more and more ruin and chaos everywhere.

And Hitler, born of the people, dares to act.

Lossow, Selsser, and Kahr know this; for they have encouraged him to do so.

For weeks, Hitler had told them and preached to them.

And, as if freed from a nightmare, the German people in Munich cheered.

Or is that not true either?

Hitler did not simply push aside the old power-hungry men, who bear so much blame for the course of events—much blood was shed in that revolution!

He didn't say to Mr. von Kahr, "Do as you did on July 7, 1918," but offered him his hand.

G ER > And he did not ask Mr. von Seifser to leave; "As late as May 1919, many of his comrades still regarded him as a very 'clever' officer, not badly regarded even among the so-called democrats"; but instead handed over control of the German police to him.

K In the presence of the great German army brother Ludendorff, Kahr, Lossow, and Selsser shook hands with the young leader of the people, Adolf Hitler, and made solemn declarations.

And Hitler believed them, trusted them, and proclaimed, beaming with joy: "Now we will fight for Germany's salvation!"

But in November, Lossow, Seisser, and Kahr went out and betrayed Hitler, betrayed the German freedom movement, and betrayed Germany.

And now came the deed, the only one that Herr von Kahr accomplished, for which he may answer before God and history: that he deployed the German Reichswehr and the German police force against the German youth, that he had Germans shoot at Germans, that he had German soldiers fire upon their comrades in arms in the war, General Ludendorff.

The best of German blood has been shed and cries out to heaven!

Indeed, this deed will bear the name of Herr von Kahr!

And now, you philistines and bourgeois, you recipients of bread and tips, cheer for the Knight of the Fatherland!

Celebrate him and pledge your loyalty to him, as the patriotic leaders preach to you.

And bask in Kahr's national glory, but then also share responsibility for his actions of November 9th!

November!

But tell us one thing: Aside from this slaughter to save the fatherland, what has actually really happened?

Weeks have already passed since then; what has been done for Germany's

rescue, for the alleviation of the terrible hardship in the country? Has the hardship now come to an end?

Well, the fatherland has been saved after all! Hitler would have led it—as you all claim, though you cannot prove it—into the abyss, but Ritter von Kahr has saved it! So you all cry out!

So, what has Kahr actually done for Germany's salvation?

That all the fighters of the N were indiscriminately thrown into prison, and that the N is now paralyzed?

Or that Mr. Wusfbofer is minister again?

You won't be able to answer any other way!

You have "peace and order," secured by machine guns, and we congratulate you on that!

But we'll give you a run for your money: Zuda and Rome are laughing; a German government has once again been thwarted; for now, they no longer need to fear it.

Dr.

Heim once said that by Christmas 1923 there would be no more popular movements.

Will it really be fine?

You're ready for it—do you at least realize that, you bourgeois?

But the German people will one day demand an accounting, not only from Mr. von Kahr, von Lossow, and von Seisser, but from all of you as well!

And you will have to answer the question: Have you risked everything, even your lives, for Germany's liberation?

And judgment is coming, as surely as God lives, and it will judge, relentlessly and justly!

And this judgment, and one day history as well, will only then, in accordance with right and justice, bestow upon the truly worthy the title: "The Knight of the Fatherland!" In another writing (dated November 19, 1923), I addressed the "patriotic united front."

I include it here: "Patriotic United Front?" The old men whine: the national men, who after all wanted the same thing, now stand in two camps, hostile to one another.

That would be terrible!

The "misled" must surely realize that they have been abused by "such leaders," etc.

Now, after all, the point is to stand together against the enemy on the Rhine and the Nuhr, the treacherous Reds in the country, etc.

Excuse me, gentlemen snowplow operators!

First of all, let it be firmly established that these gentlemen, who are “just as national at heart” as we are, have now held the reins in Bavaria since March 1920 and have free rein over the government apparatus; incidentally, they were placed there by people who today stand in our camp, or not, Mr. von Kahr? { He E It is an irrefutable fact, however, that the spring of 1920 was a golden age compared to the present day, that everything—absolutely everything—has become worse, as one might expect, rather than better. 5 The evil “socialists,” who are otherwise to blame for everything, cannot, however, be the culprits in Bavaria; for they have had absolutely no say in anything since March 1920!

But of course, that reminds me, the Reich government, the Entente, the socialists in the Reich, etc.—they’re the ones to blame. Quite right, I almost forgot that; nevertheless, it’s written day after day in all the Bavarian newspapers that are officially “loyal to the state.”

And you see, gentlemen, that is already the first reason why we can never agree.

You say, yes, the others are to blame; we’d be quite willing, but they won’t let us.

Above all, peace and order must be maintained! No, and again no, we will never accept that!

Help yourself, and God will help you!

It is up to us to do what is right and not always look to others! “Things can’t go on like this”; “Something must happen,” they shout.

Yes, but we must act and intervene!

But now to the essentials! 5 First of all, let it be clear that we, the Kampsbund, refuse to be placed in the same camp as the other so-called “Vaterkändische,” that we currently want and can have nothing in common with them.

H There are two, as we see it, to stick with your terminology for now, “national” camps. > Let us, for the sake of further discussion, call them the Aich.

For the sake of clarity, let us call one the “Nationalist” camp and our camp the “Nationalist” camp.

N The “Nationalists” see the restoration of the Penn as it was before

November 1918 as the ideal and the ultimate goal.

A “bourgeois” government without any outwardly visible Marxist influence, the tried-and-true generals and dignitaries in prominent positions, and ultimately a king again—one behind whom one can stand (not before him), in whose sunshine so many can bask, for whom there is otherwise no use in the state today.

A Bavaria with as many privileges as possible, in particular the re-establishment of the Church’s authority.

Peace and order as the ideal of every law-abiding citizen throughout the country.

Every officer and civil servant who has suffered harm as a result of the revolution shall be restored to

the position to which he is entitled according to his exact rank and seniority.

Perhaps a conflict with France at some point in the future, but “one must not speak of that, lest one provoke the enemy, and ‘we have no reason to do so.’ Nor is it certain whether the English and Americans would welcome it.

And these nationalists, these eternal admonishers and screamers, should just be quiet and not disturb “the peaceful development.”

There are some men who are certified nationalists, and who from time to time also give grand national speeches, e.

e.g.

Mr. von Kahr, and that’s it.

Everything else rests in the hands of the “national” government, for which Bavaria is envied by the whole world. 5 ae In brief, this is the social circle of the “Nationalists.”

A true idyll for the “Gartenlaube”!

The masses, thoughtless parroting of slogans, and unconditional trust in the “national government and its leaders.”

The puppet masters at work to bring about one thing: reaction.

G be 8 We “nationalists” have absolutely nothing in common with this 8.

A world separates us from it.

A. 2 First of all: The November Coup of 1818 is one of the greatest crimes, if not the greatest, ever committed against Germany.

But: it could not have happened if those responsible had remained at their posts.

It could not have happened if the representatives of the old system had not failed across the board.

There can never be a return to the pre-November 1918 era in Germany.

Those guilty from that time, not only the revolutionaries, but above all the others, must, if there is ever to be justice, be subjected to relentless punishment.

Mr. von Kahr, the then District President, will also have to answer for where he was on the night of November 7–8

and what he did in the position to which the king had appointed him.

Furthermore: For five years now, all the officials—Excellencies, state ministers, etc.—

to govern Bavaria.

The result: misery and hardship throughout the land.

We have sunk ever deeper.

And so we, the revolutionaries, now say: Not a return to the old ways, not the reaction, not the worn-out Excellencies and generals can save us; only the men of action from all walks of life can help us, mainly the young, who are ready for battle and filled with patriotism and fanaticism. From all walks of life, we say this and turn above all to the workers.

Just as in earlier times, they are treated as troublemakers even now.

Of course, patriotism is demanded of them, and people are surprised that they follow the Marxist idols when no one else cares for them.

But we want to have them as our brothers and win them over for the fatherland.

And once they belong to us, then we know that we have true and loyal friends and can also easily solve the great tasks that lie ahead of us.

The new Germany will not be built by secret councils and Excellencies.

Even the bourgeois philistines will have to get used to this.

The German people will not tolerate ossified councils inflicting the same damage on a new Germany as they did to the old one, which they ran into the ground.

We will not wait and watch anxiously to see what is being done in Berlin, Paris, London, etc., but we say that this and that is necessary, and therefore it must be done.

Let’s get to work!

To hell with it once again—if what was accomplished in Spain, in Turkey, in Italy, shouldn’t that also be possible in Germany? Are we really the pariahs of the world, which even our “nationalists” with their fear-mongering want to make us?! No, once and for all!

We know and want Germany to be saved.

We want it to be fought for.

Well then, let us fight!

We know that we are now > on our own; for our goal is entirely different from that of today’s “nationalists” and the philistines.

We want to rouse them from their complacency!

We want: the creation of a new, young Germany, free from all the dross of the past, free for all classes

and professions, but above all clean and honorable once more. It is not the so-called “patented wisdom” that shall rule this country, but the unbridled will to lead Germany to power.” I sent the following message to the Reichskriegsflagge: Comrades of the R.

K.

F.!

Victory eluded the first assault of the National Freedom Movement on the anniversary of the November Revolt of 1918.

We have lost a battle, but not our cause.

The R.

K.

F.

On November 9, 1923, along with its comrades, 255 members of the N.

S.

D.

A.

P.

And the “Oberland” had to lay down their arms.

It was disbanded and banned by General Staff Commissioner von Kahr along with its comrades-in-arms.

Two noble comrades have sealed their loyalty with their deaths: the unforgettable assault squad leader Lieutenant Casella, the best among us, and our friend Kauft.

They will testify before God that there is still a young Germany, ready to make the ultimate sacrifice for the liberation of the fatherland.

To all of you, dear comrades, I thank you for the loyalty, discipline, and courage that you, mindful of your oath, have maintained in difficult hours, which has even commanded the respect of our bloodthirsty enemy.

Our shield of honor shines brighter than ever.

The pride I feel for you, comrades, will keep me happy within the walls of the prison into which I have now been cast.

Stabelheim, November 14, 1923.

Nöbm.

Our pure will could not be diminished even by the government's attacks and proclamations and the outpourings of the press.

They did not even refrain from deliberate and vile slander.

Thus, the officers of the Kampsbund had to endure accusations that they had received extraordinarily high salaries, even in foreign currency—a slanderous and absolutely untrue claim!

Unfortunately, some officers' associations did not hesitate to adopt these claims and spread them at their meetings, while those slandered were sitting in prison and could not defend themselves.

The people have a keen sense of such attempts and do not allow their judgment to be clouded.

They recognized that not a single one of "the ambitious fellows" sought personal gain.

And "Ludendorff the Prussian" had also won the hearts of the people in his adopted home of Bavaria, despite Dr.

Matt and his comrades!

On November 9, 1923, in the fratricidal struggle among German compatriots, he had embarked on the path from commander to Führer.

The people sensed from an inner conviction that an act had been prevented that would have been a blessing to them.

The bourgeois intelligentsia, free and glad to be spared the sacrifices that the fruit of the deed would have imposed upon them, was all too inclined to approve of Kahr's "statesmanlike" act.

This class of people, which prides itself on measuring all things with "objective criteria," will always be found on the side of those who do not demand personal commitment and personal sacrifice from them.

They are the people who, when it comes time to act, step aside at the call, "Volunteers forward!" so that the volunteers may step forward.

The tertium comparationis, i.e.

H.

The common point of comparison between the November Revolution of 1918, the Soviet Republic, and September 11, 1923, is the cowardice of this philistine and literary establishment.

Today's state is, after all, the direct continuation of the so-called "Wilbelminian era"—with just one difference: the demands that the state placed on the individual citizen through compulsory military

service have been abolished. 256 The state before 1918 pretended to be a military state—unfortunately, it was not—but at least it demanded a limited degree of personal service from its citizens.

The state after 1918 is the quintessential night-watchman state: it no longer makes any demands for personal service from its citizens.

It no longer speaks of personal “duties,” but only of so-called “rights.”

That is why the majority of “citizens” love it so much and are averse to any change.

For the inferior, it is, after all, the ideal. “Contributions in kind,” taxes, and levies can be limited or circumvented; what matters is that personal effort is no longer required.

The visible sign of democracy’s decline! Since Bismarck’s time, Germany has no longer been led, but merely administered.

His Majesty the Kaiser had the earnest desire to be Germany’s leader, but was unable to prevail against the resistance that opposed his leadership.

Even less was he the autocrat that the enemies of the monarchy sought to brand him as.

Yet his closest aides were not leaders, but civil servants.

But the supreme leader can lead only if he has the gift and inclination to associate with natural leaders and tolerate them among himself.

The pre-war army was still the only school in which responsible leaders were trained.

It no longer exists.

The democratic principle of government, to which even the Imperial Army is increasingly conforming today, is the grave of leadership.

I divide people into two classes: those who stage coups, and those who do not, d.

H.

In German, into those who are men and—let’s say, so as not to use the obvious antonym—into those who are not men.

It cannot be denied that the latter category predominates.

A mathematical calculation, incidentally, leads to the same result.

If we divide the male population that lived through the war into three equal categories: the good, the mediocre, and the bad, then every front-line soldier will confirm from experience that: the highest percentage of the good, fewer of the mediocre, and the fewest of the bad have fallen.

The ratio of these classes, which before the war was 1:1:1 under the most favorable assumption, is

therefore perhaps 1:3:4 today; that is,

H.

The inferior ones predominate.

Can this probability calculation seriously be disputed?

I do not believe so.

It is only as a result of this disproportionately large loss of the “Aristoi,” the best of the nation—not by birth or status, but by personal merit—that the inferior were able to seize power. 17 Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 257 It cannot be a coincidence that women were able to attain a privileged position in this state.

Not only in society, but also in political life, women are at the forefront today.

With the exception of the Völlische parties, all parties now send women to parliament as representatives of the people.

The adage “mulier taceat”—“let women be silent”—no longer holds true today; women have a say everywhere, and men submit to them.

But it is precisely this equality and subordination of men to women that is considered particularly masculine today.

They mock themselves and do not know how!

Times of state power and greatness, the course of history marked by struggle, have never tolerated a dominant position for the female sex.

It is hard to imagine that an Alexander the Great or Frederick the Great, a Caesar or Napoleon, a Prince Eugene or a Charles XII

5 would have bowed to effeminate influences is hard to imagine.

They were indeed the greatest generals of all time, the shining examples and leaders of their people, but still only rough war heroes.

And not the enlightened statesmen of an ideal realm, consecrated with the palm of eternal peace in the league of nations, in beauty and dignity.

In this sea of cowardice, Germany today has the helmsmen it deserves.

I could not think of any better.

And only in this state could the Jew attain the position he holds today.

In a state where heroes must remain silent, the merchant must have the final say.

In an age in which the ideals of masculine strength no longer hold sway, which extols unmanly and effeminate virtues, which knows only reconciliation and eternal peace, but in which the spirit of defense and combat is suppressed, the Jew, by virtue of his refined character and intellectual faculties, is always able to assume a dominant position.

And here my statement diverges once again from that of the national epic poet.

Not: the Jew is to blame for everything! but: we are to blame that the Jew can rule today.

I am certainly the last person to view the Jew “objectively” and who would not be determined to wage the struggle against Jewish domination.

But I believe one thing: the struggle against the Jews is being waged on the wrong and untrue front.

One does not combat the Jew by imitating his faults—and only his faults—and seeking to outdo them, by practicing business ethics in a way the Jew does not—because he is too lazy to do so—but solely by doing things differently and better than the Jew.

I am more in favor of practical anti-Semitism here than of insipid chatter and repulsive hypocrisy.

Jewish dominance will cease to exist when German men in Germany once again speak and act like Germans. 258 Germany will recover when it becomes German again.

The principles of life today are simply not German, but Jewish.

It is not “serving,” but “earning” that is today the guiding principle of loyalty to the state.

“People” and “state” are today contradictory concepts.

There can be no question of “all power emanating from the people,” as the Weimar Constitution so beautifully puts it.

The state today is a limited liability company of the financial powers, who, though they do not take responsibility, command behind the scenes and rule without restriction.

The financial powers used to rely on the sword to achieve their goals; today they believe they can do without this aid.

Conscription had to be abolished because it directly conflicts with business ethics.

Through the service “to the people and the fatherland” preached by the army, young Germans were taught principles that were bound to harm business.

Moreover: In the army, the German who became a soldier came to know the most social institution of the state—a realization that must be repugnant to the merchant.

At that time, officers and civil servants served not for the salary, but for the honor.

The officer corps was the most socially educated and socially minded, even if the enemies of the military were to claim the opposite a hundred times over.

And that is why, during the coup, it was precisely the officers who had to be disgraced; their epaulets and cockades had to be torn off to silence these heralds of social justice.

This cleared the way for the state of today.

The lament of the deluded people is not for lost glory, but only for the loss of money and property.

F d " The great Carthaginian general Hannibal could repeat today, unchanged, the speech he delivered two centuries before Christ to his deluded compatriots: "You should have wept when our waters were taken from us, our forests burned, and wars with foreign lands were forbidden.

That is the wound from which we shall die.

When the defeated Carthage was stripped of its arms,

armor was stripped from defeated Carthage, when it saw itself henceforth defenseless and helpless among the many well-armed peoples of Africa, no one complained.

But now you wail that you must raise taxes from your own wealth, as if the state were being carried to its grave.

How much I fear that you will soon realize that today you have wept only over the most bearable of evils.” Carthage heeded the voice of its general and leader as little as Germany today heeds the warning voice of its most loyal citizens.

In the year 146, the Romans razed Carthage to the ground.

Half a century after their defeat, the Carthaginians vanished from history.

Not money and goods, but only struggle and the restoration of our honor can save us from the fate of Carthage. 17% 259 “The essence of a state,” asks Treitschke, “is that it can enforce its will with physical force.

A state without power is no state at all.” In this state, which is no state, the soldier finds no place.

The intellectual trade of the bourgeoisie, the philistines and the literary establishment, alone sets the standard for the judgment of all things.

F 1 1 wise, level-headed, and mature “citizens” thus simply concluded: Kahr’s “statesmanlike act” is a blessing for Germany; for the “Puls” was 1.

Poorly prepared, would 2. have collapsed at the border at the latest, and 3.

Would not have been approved by foreign powers.

To this it must be said: Regarding 1.: Hitler’s “coup” was at least as well prepared as the coup planned

by Mr. von Kahr for a few days later.

Both coup plotters had factored the instruments of state power into their calculations.

Detailed agreements had been reached with the leaders of the Reichswehr and the state police.

However, I must refrain from including documents for the same reasons I have already cited in the prefaces.

An action against the state's instruments of power, a struggle against the Reichswehr and the state police, had therefore not been considered at all.

Of course, the operation was not announced in advance to just anyone and everyone.

Consequently, some circles were taken by surprise when the operation began and had not been able to make detailed preparations.

To reassure the so-called wise ones, however, it can be said that those who needed to know were informed clearly and in a timely manner of what they were supposed to know.

Since, unfortunately, ninety out of a hundred people cannot keep their mouths shut, a leader must often refrain from making announcements that, while appropriate and desirable in themselves, must be kept secret for the greater good.

Re 2.

I wish only to share here an excerpt from a protocol concerning an office in Berlin that was of decisive importance for the success of the undertaking: "I was told here that on November 8

November, everything was prepared for the Hitler putsch, and that the plan would certainly have succeeded if Kahr and his comrades had not...

had been willing to put their own well-being above that of the Fatherland." So the gentlemen can rest assured that the necessary authorities in Berlin were also informed.

Incidentally, the deployment along Bavaria's northern border, which Captain Ehrhardt was entrusted with leading, was not merely a pastime, and furthermore, it should no longer be entirely unknown to the public that certain formations and units "marched" in northern Germany on November 9

November in northern Germany as well.

Sapienti sat!, d.

H.

In German: I can't say any more than that; if these brief hints are not enough for you, I'm afraid I can't help you.

It is actually difficult for me to comment on point 3.

It is a pity that a large part of the German people does not even give any thought to the undignified and shameful nature of such an argument.

I can, if necessary, still understand that there are also people who cannot embrace the nationalist stance: a matter is only good and right if the French do not agree with it.

What I cannot comprehend, however, is that in a matter that concerns exclusively how we arrange our own house internally—a matter that is of no concern whatsoever to foreign countries and that, even with the most zealous will, cannot be linked to the Treaty of Versailles—that in such a matter, any thought is given at all to whether it pleases foreign countries or not.

But to our shame, it must be said not only that this is the case, but that even “national” Germany threatens to come to terms with this submissive standpoint.

This is the fruit of the efforts, now carried out for years, of the internationally oriented parties to always justify and seek to enforce domestic political demands by pointing to the “sun of mercy” or

the frowns of the Entente, and to seek to enforce them.

But it should actually be superfluous to say even a word about the contemptible and reprehensible nature of this course of action.

The “democratic” Germany, which on November 9,

November 1918 celebrated its resurrection following the example and at the behest of the Western democracies, otherwise yields everything to its adored idols.

In particular, whatever is done in the country of Mr. Woodrow Wilson—who is revered as a saint by every true democrat—is regarded as infallible gospel.

Perhaps it would be quite good if these gentlemen were to read what the American Secretary of State officially stated on behalf of the American government during the Sacco-Vanzetti uproar in August 1927, when several great powers, including even the Pope, were advocating for the pardon of the two anarchists and thereby attempting to interfere in American affairs.

And if a defeated people must serve as a point of comparison, then one might also recall how the French behaved in such matters after their complete defeat in 1871.

And surely they stood—and still stand—at a particularly high “cultural” level, according to the democratic creed!

Thus, looking to foreign countries is entirely inappropriate when assessing the undertaking of November 9, 1923.

Moreover, this argument does not hold water simply because one of the great powers of the Entente on the morning of November 9

November morning by having an envoy officially convey his government’s congratulations to it.

For the sake of amusement, it should be added that this representative was one of the envoys from the enemy alliance states who, on the evening of November 8,

November had been temporarily confined to their hotel by a regrettable misunderstanding involving a detachment of Allied troops.

An incident, incidentally, that is usually unavoidable during revolutions, as I would like to add for the benefit of the timid, whose hair still stands on end today at the thought of this terrible misfortune and its horrific consequences.

On closer inspection, therefore, the argument that the “Hitler surge” would have collapsed even without the shooting exercise at the Feldherrnhalle falls apart.

On the other hand, we can acknowledge a fact that is often overlooked: that Hitler’s preemptive strike caused the coup planned by Mr. von Kahr to fall through.

Kahr and his comrades wanted—let’s say, for the sake of Bavarian interests—to strike first.

The Völkisch movement would have been allowed to participate; they were to be the henchmen and, ultimately, the duped ones.

Anyone wishing to know more about this need only read the reports of the Bavarian State Parliament’s investigative committee from December 1927.

This goal was thwarted by the events of November 9.

November.

Hence the nameless rage and the persecution of Hitler’s followers.

Bavarian history, which is not lacking in dark days, has been burdened with a sad chapter due to the betrayal of November 9, 1923.

It is a calamity that the government of this state, which is one of the most German, is repeatedly infiltrated by figures who are puppets of non-Bavarian and foreign powers.

A summary assessment of the activities of the governor of the monarchy, Mr. von Kahr, must lead to the conclusion that under him legal concepts have been fundamentally altered,

H., that Kahr has, in practice, prepared and carried out Bavaria’s separation from the Reich in many respects.

Here, connections come to light that were only inadequately clarified by the Fuchs-Machhaus trial, as well as certain preparatory work by Pitinger, a confidant of Mr. von Kahr (3.

B.

On a separate coal supply for Bavaria), appear in a peculiar light.

The Eight against the “Prussian” Ludendorff was no mere accidental misstep.

It lay entirely within the sphere of thought and the will of those string-pullers who do not wish to forget the Main Line.

These “patriots” of the old school in a new edition, who know only the Weißwurst Equator, and for whom the word “German” is still an unheard-of addition today.

This peculiar sort of white-and-blue inhabitants, whose world is the homeland of which they dream.

Who, in their narrow-minded obstinacy, long for a parochial state whose calendar runs backward from 1866.

A Bavarian compatriot once wryly described the horizon of these peculiar kinsmen as follows: they recognize only three races: first, the “Bavarians” (naturally, only the genuine ones!), second: east of Salzburg, the rascals, and third: north of the Main, the “Prussians.”

The latter, of course, represent the epitome of the complacent.

A certain class of Bavarian “statesmen” attaches great importance to constantly reviving these peculiar state-centric—or, to put it more diplomatically, “sovereign-state” —ideas.

When one says Prussia, one means the Empire.

Mr. von Kahr was unable to completely escape their influence, if not in intention, then certainly in effect.

In contrast to him, the leaders of the freedom movement and the uprising of November 8, 1923, championed the idea of the Reich.

We nationalists love our homeland of Bavaria passionately; but our fatherland is Germany.

The ruthless and unconditional struggle that this movement waged to keep Bavaria within the Reich and against any form of secessionist efforts earned it the hatred and persecution of those who sought to destroy the Reich.

This hatred toward the Völkisch Movement was by no means limited to those circles that sought Bavaria’s separation from the Reich.

The Völkische met with no less vehement rejection because of their revolutionary, forward-looking goals among all those who see their longings satisfied only in a return to the old ways.

After futile attempts to harness the Völkische combat leagues for its own purposes, the reactionary forces had to realize that they would never, ever find allies in them.

The young, fiery freedom movement has no interest in the reinstatement of the monarch and state pillars who fled in November 1918, nor does it desire a restoration of the conditions that led to November 9.

November.

For precisely those who fight the overthrow most passionately, the question of whether the pre-November state—which Kahr sought to resurrect—bears a fair share of the blame for the fact that this revolt was able to gain ground and take hold in the first place has long been answered.

And as a monarchist, to which I still proudly profess my allegiance even today, I indignantly reject the notion that such a false and doomed system should be allowed to claim the guardianship of the monarchy for itself, thereby dealing the final blow to the monarchical ideal forever.

This system, which retreated step by step, ultimately gave itself up, and gave birth to November 1918, will—this is my firmest conviction—never rise again and will perish once and for all.

The reaction's repeated betrayal of the young freedom movement can only hasten this inglorious downfall. 203 A visible sign of this inglorious decline is that the man of the front from the people, who worked his way up through his own efforts, has been deceived by the typical representative of the home front bureaucracy.

Social democracy had neither the power nor the strength to overthrow the old system; it lacked the moral foundation for this.

The national movement alone is capable of bringing down this system.

The bourgeois worldview leads people, when they step out of school into life, away from this and their own people toward bourgeois society.

That is why it has failed to instill in the worker pride and faith in his people and fatherland.

Schools and the state have not—unlike all other powerful states, especially France—educated young German citizens to be nationalists, but rather patriots.

The patriot is all too easily inclined to become intoxicated by gestures and words; the nationalist recognizes only action.

We must refuse to be burdened with the bourgeois and patriotic worldview and lumped together with its representatives.

We are neither bourgeois, nor right-wing, nor, in today's parlance, national; we are radical-ethnic-nationalist.

We are German nationalists.

Nor are we fascists!

German fighters need no foreign role models.

Certainly not from the Italians, who denied the German soldier their loyalty to the Reich.

This is not meant to be a value judgment on Mussolini.

German leaders are praised abroad, while Mussolini is hated by everyone; that alone proves that he is a statesman of his people.

But we don't need any Mussolinis in Germany—not even 1:100,000.

We have enough role models in our own history of freedom!

November 9, 1923, saw, on the one hand, idealism, ardent patriotism, enthusiasm, courage, determination, self-sacrifice, and honesty—in a word: Young Germany; on the other, sobriety, caution, duplicity, breach of honor, perjury, orders, and incitement to these acts—in short, the desperate attempt of a dying breed to cling to power.

On the one hand, selfless fighters for a holy cause; on the other, alongside men who fulfilled their duty with gritted teeth, opportunistic politicians, in their retinue sycophants, people who wanted to regain their standing through bravery against fellow Germans or earn their spurs; Weather vanes of wavering conviction, jugglers of opinion on an extraordinary scale.

That one must betray the people in order to save the "state"—even the most sophistical opposing argument could not convince me of this.

Nor could I bring myself to share the profound insight of those people who readily equate the people and the fatherland with the current government.

Nevertheless, the Bavarian government has repeatedly emphasized at every opportune moment—lest we forget—that we in Bavaria have had a "national" government since 1920!

I wish to give special attention to my statement regarding the Reichswehr and the State Police, because on November 9, 1923, I was still a member of the Reichswehr as an active officer, even though I had already submitted my resignation.

At this point, I can only repeat one thing once again: I am still a soldier today, and nothing but a soldier.

My whole heart, my whole mind, and my whole being belong to the army.

If, in my defense speech before the People's Court, I assessed the conduct of the Wehrmacht on November 9, 1923, in a manner that many comrades in the Reichswehr found painful and bitter, it was certainly not done to sully the institution to which I have proudly belonged since its founding.

Nor was it to deliberately offend comrades toward whom I continued to maintain friendship and respect even after November 9, 1923.

Precisely because I knew how many outstanding men stood in the ranks of the Reichswehr who were determined to remain in the army, I had to speak in this way.

My words were solely the expression of a concern I harbored for the development of this sole bastion of German character and German strength in New Germany.

For it seems to me a contradiction when the leadership of the Reichswehr, on the one hand, claims to continue the tradition of the Old Army by entrusting traditional units with the task of preserving the legacy of the glorious regiments, while, on the other hand, it systematically suppresses the traditional soldierly spirit of the old army.

Here a brief overview of the Reichswehr's development
may be in order: Its core troops in 1919 were the Freikorps, which were recruited from idealists and ardent nationalists.

These nationalists were allowed to overthrow the Spartacus League and fight for the restoration of constitutional order.

Once the fighting was over, there was no longer any need for nationalists.

Others came and took their places.

The concern of the Republic's rulers was now not the Reichswehr's fighting spirit, but its loyalty to the constitution.

In the Ruhr region in 1920, there was once again a need for united, battle-ready nationalist units.

They were allowed to fight until they had fulfilled their task: the protection and security of the government of the day.

Once they had fulfilled this mission, they were sent home and reviled in the most contemptuous manner; the Freikorps fell into disbandment.

The uprising in Upper Silesia could no longer shake the thrones of the men whose identification is still prevented by the Press Protection Act.

There was therefore no cause for official intervention; the voluntary struggle of German nationalists against the Polish robbers was graciously tolerated.

In the Ruhr region in 1923, only a few individuals were permitted to sacrifice their lives and freedom for the people and the fatherland; they had to endure being reviled as "criminal saboteurs," betrayed, sold out, and shot.

The Reichswehr, the instrument of the constitution, had to keep itself aloof from these acts of freedom.

Nationalist activity within the army was viewed with disfavor and was suppressed.

By the fall of 1923, the "purge" of the Reichswehr had been carried out.

The nationalist-minded officers and soldiers in the ranks had to submit and obey.

"Discipline" demanded unconditional subordination to the will of the Reich government; moreover, the troops had sworn an oath to the Constitution and were "paid by the Republic."

In my opinion, however, the oath to the Constitution, that is to say,

H.

To a thing, something unnatural.

A man can only swear an oath to another man, not to a form, just as he can never pledge allegiance to a thing, but always only to a person.

Thus, there was little difficulty in detaching the Bavarian Division from the Imperial Army; it was simply committed to Bavaria, and the Bavarian state guaranteed its pay.

It was November 8,

November, when the nationalists rose up to drag the Reichswehr along with them.

We did not know to whom the Bavarian Reichswehr was currently loyal; in any case, we wanted them on our side in the struggle for freedom.

But the “state” gave the order to fire.

And the German Reichswehr and State Police fired on the freedom fighters.

What a change from 1919 to 1923!

I later tried to do justice to the conduct of the army and police, whose discipline and obedience had been subjected to this barely bearable test of endurance by their leadership.

I am unable to do so.

If, however, anything contributed to preempting an unbiased judgment from the outset, it was the praise of the Red and similarly oriented press.

When a publication of the caliber of the “Münchener Post” effusively confirms the soldiers’ “loyalty and patriotism,” it is therefore a matter of its own making.

This should also force the Reichswehr to reflect on the path its leadership has led it down.

The Bavarian general who pitted the Reichswehr against the combat units—also one of the “saviors of the fatherland”—later proudly proclaimed that he had crushed the “putsch” “because the enemy was at the borders.” 255 One might also consider another line of reasoning: “Because the enemy is at the border, I will not fire on my fellow countrymen.” At least that was the conclusion once reached by another general who was tasked with a similar mission.

That was, however, not a Bavarian savior of the state, but merely Napoleon Bonaparte.

I had to say what I considered pernicious.

And when I did so, I believe that, both in intent and in result, I acted not against the Reichswehr, but for it.

My goal was to unreservedly combat the mercenary viewpoint that seeks to degrade the Army—the school of military strength and the focal point of the nation's will to fight—into a mere economic supply institution.

Under pressure and by exploiting economic hardship, a type of person has been cultivated in the civil service who subordinates every personal opinion to the consideration of position and livelihood.

Böhner characterized this type of civil servant with the expression "bureaucratic whores."

In an address to the civil servants of his police department, he once said that he divided his subordinates into two classes: civil servants and day laborers.

By civil servants, he meant only those men who steadfastly followed the path of their convictions.

But the army, in particular, needs independent and responsible leaders.

It has always been the noble privilege of the officer to place economic concerns behind the great ideals to which his calling directs him and without which his profession cannot exist.

If the army is led not by officers but by salaried civil servants of the Imperial Army, by wage earners, it is incapable of fulfilling the ultimate tasks reserved solely for it.

For one does not die for "pay," but only for "ideals!" One rarely finds a Red publication that deals with the officer corps without emphasizing that it is "paid by the Republic."

This foolish drivel, which one gorilla parrots after another, must finally be sharply countered.

Just as the Royal or Imperial Ossizier Corps was not paid from the sovereign's treasury, the current Ossizier Corps is not paid from the pockets of the republican dignitaries who, after all, embody the Republic.

No: then as now, the pay is covered by the tax revenues of the entire population, though I leave it open as to whether the segment of the population that pays the bulk of the taxes is particularly enthusiastic about this Republic.

So it is not the Republic, but the German people who pay.

That is still a different matter altogether, gentlemen. In particular, the retired officer who receives a pension has a legal claim to it against the German state, because the state has withheld a portion of his pay exclusively for this purpose since his entry into the army.

Incidentally, I believe that the Republic's rulers did not refrain from laying hands on the pensions out of pure philanthropy and a noble sense of justice; they likely reasoned, in shrewd calculation: Pensions are the surest guarantee of peace and order.

The higher the pensions of the high and highest dignitaries of the monarchy, the less need there is to put them at risk!

I just wanted to touch on this in passing in this context.

It does not alter the fundamentally necessary attitude of the commander toward economic considerations.

In the spring of 1928, the so-called “Phöbus scandal” was staged by the now “state-resounding” factions of the Reichstag, whose favor the Reichswehr is always particularly concerned with.

Mr. Gessler deemed it preferable to leave the stage before this spectacle was performed.

A department of the Reichswehr Ministry had invested money in a somewhat generous manner in several ventures and lost several million in the process.

In the age of “General” Dawes and Judo Barmal, this is actually no earth-shattering affair.

The unusual aspect—and thus the mistake—was merely that the funds were intended to support patriotic enterprises and that the head of the department, Captain Lohmann, had not personally enriched himself.

That is why the party comrades Lange-Hegermann and Bauer pounced like wild beasts on the unfortunate officer, who was, after all, alien to the achievements of the revolution.

Why do I cite this case in this context?

Because it proves, on the one hand, that officers trained in the military are not cut out to be merchants and should therefore keep their hands off such matters.

On the other hand, however, it proves that the zeitgeist of doing business has found its way even into the ranks of irreproachable officers and high-ranking positions in the army.

The blame certainly does not lie here with the officer who had to serve as the scapegoat and was, of course, sent into the desert by his superior, but with a system that is prepared to betray the unshakable principles of what was once the world’s greatest army.

It is certainly not the parliamentarians who have the right to cry out, “Economy, Horatio!”; they are the least qualified to do so.

Rather, it is up to the highest leaders of the army to banish from the army a spirit and an attitude that run counter to its purpose.

And thereby to dispel fears harbored by the friends, not by the professional destroyers, of the army!

And I must add one more thing here: The behavior that the representatives of the Imperial Army later displayed in the so-called Fememord trials of 1928 was anything but a commitment to heroic ideals, loyalty, and comradeship to the very end.

The name of General Pawelsz, as the prominent representative of the Republican Reichswehr authorities, will forever remain associated with this organized persecution of Germans and the abandonment of comrades willing to make the ultimate sacrifice.

The general may well be a reliable Republican—I do not dispute that—but a soldier? — I really do not know whether the world imagines a soldier to be like that.

And whether Napoleon would have said of him: “Voilà un homme!” (That is a man.) I do not believe so.

The fear that arises in light of such observations—that considerations of expediency may at times take precedence over traditional professional values—is difficult to dismiss.

In addition to this concern, I cannot get past the fact that we are kept in the Imperial Army for reasons of prestige.

The integrity of the officer corps must be preserved so purely that it is above even the appearance of impropriety.

The retention of First Lieutenant Braun in the army despite his misconduct in the courtroom did not meet this requirement.

From this perspective, in my closing statement during the trial, I spoke the warning words about the choice between loyalty and pay as a sign of foreboding.

It was meant to be a wake-up call to rouse those who were asleep.

State Commissioner Dr.

Nitter von Kahr stated in court: “The Reichswehr is the instrument with which communism can be held back.” This statement proves that, in its view of the purpose and mission of the army, the “national” Bavarian state government is in full agreement with the Democratic Reich Government.

Thus it also becomes understandable that on November 9, 1923, to suppress the Völli uprising, two seemingly opposing poles—which I might characterize, perhaps secondarily, by the names Gessler and Matt—came together and united, as it were, of their own accord.

Nor can it be overlooked that the Bavarian state

government, following the reintegration of the Bavarian Division into the Reich Army—which, as is well known, took place on November 9, 1923—wanted to see a greater autonomy for the Bavarian Reichswehr enshrined in the constitution.

There was disagreement over the form, but agreement on the substance.

This intended purpose of the Reichswehr, as expressed by the “statesman” and non-frontline soldier Kahr, must be strongly opposed.

The army is not a security and enforcement force.

The suppression of communism can be no more the task and purpose of the Reichswehr than the crushing of the Völkisch movement, for which Kahr deployed it.

May God protect the Reichswehr from another 9/11/23!

Never and under no circumstances can its raison d'être be to suppress and shoot down fellow Germans, even if they are evil right-wing or left-wing radicals.

The Reichswehr will and must see its task in keeping watch at the borders and preserving the proud heritage of the glorious German Army in quiet heroic grandeur until the day comes when the call goes out to all 269 German fighters to unfurl the flags once more and march to the Rhine.

I 5 g j "Always remember" will unite the Reichswehr and the National Guard once more; only this spirit will lead them to Tauroggen and Leipzig. 30.

As a defendant before the People's Court.

On February 26, 1924, the so-called "Hitler Trial" began before the Munich I People's Court, which had convened at the War Academy, where I had spent my cadet year in 1907.

As early as 1928, attempts had been made to persuade me and my friends to exercise "moderate restraint" during the trial.

Apparently on high orders, Professor Bauer visited us in prison on February 19, 1923.

He had been granted unlimited visiting time without supervision, which had never been granted before.

I listened to his explanations without comment; I took note of them.

My legal representative, Iuftigrat Schramm, also explained to me the line of reasoning that he, after consulting with representatives of the judicial authorities, deemed it necessary to convey to me.

I replied to him on February 22, 1924, with the following letter: "After careful consideration, I have come to reject the ideas you have presented.

However, I do request that you give priority to the decision of General Ludendorff, Hitler, and Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel."

I wish to inform these parties that I do not consider the limited authority granted to me in this matter to be appropriate, and that I cannot accept the reasons given for it.

Rather, I see the only real and universal possibility for the recovery of our intolerable conditions in the relentless pursuit of the process.

The statements from the districts communicated to me by von Zonen, which advocate the strictest possible restriction of negotiations, ultimately boil down to the wisdom of "preventing the worst."

It is this policy that has happily led us to the heap of rubble before which we stand today.

The national idea cannot tolerate these compromises and half-measures.

Now that the struggle has brought us before the court, I believe we must take up and carry out the fight here with all the means at our disposal.

The idea of sparing the individuals Kahr, Lossow, and Seisser is unbearable to me.

We can already see how they want to handle the matter: Kahr remains.

President of the Government; Seisser, who has repeatedly fallen flat on his face since November 1918, Oltstichel—no, that's not how we bet.

We certainly don't want a Fuchs-Machhaus trial in the second

edition.

In my view, and this is my firm conviction, complete clarification is required, and therefore a ruthless struggle. 8 \; But personally, I am not at all willing to make any concessions.

I have now been in custody for 9 months.

November 1923.

Given the circumstances, an acquittal must be secured.

Despite this, all the appeals against detention that you were kind enough to submit have been dismissed from on high.

Messrs. Kahr and his comrades were, of course, not seriously suspected!; they were now given months in a cell to cover up the traces of their preparation and involvement.

The subordinates, too, have likely been properly dealt with by now.

This fact alone, in my view, sufficiently characterizes the legal situation.

Every request for relief I have made has been rejected with scorn and contempt.

Of course, my latest complaint regarding the 1st

district attorney.

Since I waged this struggle against petty harassment less for myself than for my friends, who have the hope of being able to remain in Stadelheim, it is naturally not over, and I will simply take other steps to remedy the situation.

Not a single day—I have vowed this—will I sit in prison for nothing! I do not wish to detain you, esteemed Mr. Justice, with a description of my personal attitude, but I consider it necessary to fully explain my request to you, along with an indication of my state of mind, before the proceedings begin.

I hope this letter reaches you in time, and I look forward to being able to spend time with you continuously starting early next week.

P.

P.” In high spirits and determined, I left Stadelheim on February 25;

Stadelheim; I was driven by car to Blutenburgstraße.

Accommodations and meals at the infantry school were provided in the best possible manner.

In addition to extensive police protection in the building, several hundred officers of the state police were also quartered in the Cadet Corps building in our honor.

The presiding judge of the full court that was to judge us was District Court Director Neidhardt, a man of refined intellect and legal conviction, whom we truly did not envy for his task of steering this trial through all its pitfalls.

A number of people’s judges stood by his side.

An official from the Ministry of Justice also consistently graced us with his presence and likely supported the presiding judge with many unwelcome suggestions.

Prosecutors Stenglein and Dr.

Ehard represented the prosecution.

While Stenglein’s demeanor—as a front-line soldier, he sought to acknowledge the defendants’ military motives—was refreshingly objective and restrained, Ehard’s attacks and remarks often gave rise to heated clashes.

In the courtroom, we all faced each other for the first time since November 9, 1923, were able to look each other in the eye and shake hands: General Ludendorff, Adolf Hitler, First Lieutenant Kriebel, President Pöhner, District Administrator Dr.

Frick, Dr.

Weber, First Lieutenant Brückner, and Lieutenants Wagner and Perneth.

Our defense was handled by the judicial officers Schramm, Kohl, Bauer, and von Zezschwitz, and the attorneys Lütgebrune, Dr.

Holl, Dr.

Götz, Hemmeter, Roder, and Gademann.

It would probably have been better if we defendants had jointly retained a few attorneys to represent our common interests and left the division of responsibilities to them, rather than each of us appearing individually with our legal representative in the dock.

Nevertheless, even so, each of the attorneys devoted all their skill and knowledge to our cause.

That they did not succeed in bringing their case to a complete victory, i.

I.

to the acquittal of the defendants was certainly not their fault.

The verdict had been decided from the outset, and the resistance of some of the judges to the conviction was gently but ultimately successfully overcome.

A penitential act, such as the impassioned Justice Councilor Kohl was once forced to perform during the trial, would, however, likely have been avoidable in a trial conducted as I indicated above.

That we, the defendants, and the defense attorneys allowed this course of action at all, instead of taking the fight with the court to the bitter end, was a concession that no one except Hitler, Brückner, and myself objected to, but which likely took its bitter revenge in the further course of events and in the verdict.

It was a joyful reunion when I was able to shake Hitler’s hand again.

He had gone through severe inner struggles; in Landsberg he had even gone on a hunger strike, from which Drexler and another party comrade had only with great difficulty dissuaded him after much persuasion.

At the reunion, it seemed to me as if Hitler had feared reproaches from his comrades-in-arms of November 8

He had feared for the failure of the enterprise.

He was all the more moved with joy when he found in all of us the old fighting spirit and triumphant mood that even a stay of several months in prison had been unable to dampen in the slightest.

I shall skip over the proceedings in the courtroom; they have been reported in detail by the press worldwide.

Of the witnesses sent to testify against us, General Barbed Wire Commissioner Dr.

Gustav Ritter von Kahr, who could no longer remember anything, presented the most regrettable picture.

In contrast, the behavior of General von Losso stood out favorably, as he at least fought for the bad cause he was tasked with leading.

The health of the high-ranking statesmen, however, suffered so severely from the blows they endured in the courtroom that they were forced to take a recuperative stay in Corfu; their mental breakdown proves that one’s honor cannot be used unchallenged as a political bargaining chip.

The police and the courts, which otherwise viciously persecuted every nationalist who merely wore a badge, had, as expected, no objection to their escape, even though a judicial investigation was

conducted against them, at least for appearances' sake.

The Bavarian courts had more important things to do: they had to ensure that the 20 newly built cells in the Landsberg prison were appropriately occupied, so that the new construction had not been carried out in vain.

I cannot deny that I was impressed by the overall impression I gained from the remaining witnesses, insofar as the court summoned them for questioning or

I cannot conceal the overall impression I gained.

While the statements of the representatives of the so-called leading social classes, in particular of some high-ranking officers, were carefully weighed to do justice to the system they loved, the Dll minorum gentlum, the so-called little people, spoke frankly and freely from the heart, as their conscience and conviction dictated.

It became clear once again here—and must be stated plainly—that loyalty, devotion, and camaraderie are more at home among the simple man than among the upper crust, old and new.

The simple man knows no reservations, no word of honor subject to revocation.

He does not walk the winding paths of bourgeois social order, which elevates the lie to a commandment, but strides firmly along the broad road of the people.

He does not lie to himself and is true to himself; therefore, he is also more loyal to others.

Significantly, the second article of the soldiers' code of war has designated loyalty as their foremost duty.

A people that has experienced November 1918 must first find its way back to loyalty.

Only on this ground, cleansed of deceit and pretense, can rebirth take place.

Loyalty of the led to the leader; but no less so of the leader to the follower.

Men who feel called to be leaders should always keep the latter point in mind!

It seems to me that it is precisely in this regard that countless sins have been committed in recent years.

I wanted to express such thoughts in the courtroom when I contrasted the loyalty of the common man with the lack of moral fortitude in some officers.

I certainly do not wish to generalize: the behavior of some witnesses, however, virtually compelled me to make this observation.

Whether Generals von Kleinhenz and von Hemmer and some higher-ranking Reichswehr officers, from staff officers upward, feel pure joy when recalling their behavior in the courtroom, I leave open.

And even an officer of the rank of Colonel General Count von Bothmer cannot be spared critical

judgment, not even by his advanced age.

Under no circumstances and in no situation was it permissible—as the leaders of the Munich officers' associations in particular did—to sacrifice the chivalry demanded of them by their rank and profession to so-called state authority.

Thus, the unrestrained manner in which, for example, Lieutenant Colonel von Berchem gave free rein to his Bavarian aversion to Ludendorff also provoked general outrage.

In contrast, the fresh, unpretentious statements of some young officers and the dignified and unflinching testimonies of Captain Etzel, Major Haselmayr, Major Schwandner, First Lieutenant Schlichtegroll—who has since passed away far too soon—and the upright Major Sir P. stood out strikingly and favorably.

The duty-bound and truthful accounts of nearly all the criminal investigators made a refreshing impression.

The Pöhner school did not disappoint.

We could not, however, suppress a slight smile when one of these witnesses, apparently a second Sherlock Holmes, who had been on duty at the Bürgerbräukeller on November 8,

had been on duty at the Bürgerbräukeller, stated: "When the machine guns were brought into the hall, we realized that something must be wrong." The defense attorneys' speeches were all of an unusually high caliber. 18 Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 273 The clear, convincing words of Attorney Lütgebrune, spoken from the lofty vantage point of the law, found their counterpart in the spirited, heart-stirring, and rousing remarks of Justice Councilor Kohl and Attorney Holl.

Justice Councilor Schramm, who took the floor in my defense, knew how to captivate both the court and the audience with his masterful speech.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank him once again from the bottom of my heart for his excellent assistance.

For he fought my battle not only with his great legal skill and oratorical talent, but also with his whole being, with heart and soul.

Of all the defendants' speeches, Ludendorff's words made the deepest impression.

The significance of his much-maligned defense speech will likely only be fully grasped and appreciated in its broader context by future generations.

Adolf Hitler's impassioned words gripped hearts so powerfully that tears glistened in everyone's eyes in the courtroom, even at the judges' bench.

I myself stood before my judge freely and proudly; I rejected from the outset the idea that I might have to defend myself for my actions on November 8, 1923.

For it would have been more understandable to me to have to answer before a revolutionary tribunal for

having fought for king and country than to have to justify the act of November 8, 1923, before a German court.

November 1923.

My position was: If a German court were truly to regard the worldview of spinelessness, deceit, and disloyalty as the correct one, then I would rather live in prison.

To gloss over the act for which I had to answer, or even to regret it—I did not entertain such thoughts: I was proud of it and stood by it unreservedly.

As the conduct of the trial had already suggested, we were convicted.

Pöhner, Kriebel, Hitler, and Weber had to serve the remainder of their sentences in Landsberg.

I was released on probation along with the other defendants.

A large crowd waited at the gates of the War Academy to greet the “high traitors.”

Mounted police, who charged into the crowd in the manner of Cossacks and lashed out indiscriminately with whips and clubs at men, women, and children, could not quell the enthusiasm.

On April 1, 1924, I was a free man once again.

That very same day, I was warmly welcomed by my friends and comrades-in-arms.

Now that I had regained my freedom, two paths lay before me: one, the path of boundless contempt, which leads to the conclusion: We have done everything to save this Germany, which has rewarded us time and again with ingratitude, abuse, and disgrace.

It does not want to be saved and therefore cannot be saved.

Let it deal with itself!

I want to know nothing more and, like the many millions of so-called Germans, live only for myself.

The other path bears the words: Germany, Germany above all, and in misfortune now more than ever!

We know that nothing great has ever been achieved in history without many setbacks, defeats, and disappointments; we are convinced that only fanatical nationalism can save Germany and that ultimate victory belongs to it.

The martyrs and heroes who fell for our sacred cause have left us the legacy to fight for Germany’s rise and to triumph.

I knew which path I had to take.

My heart and my work belonged to the common man: I wanted to be a faithful friend, comrade, and leader to him.

To the simple, ordinary man of the people, who had earned my entire admiration and respect on the battlefield.

The war, in which the humblest of Germany's sons shared the same fate as I, stood shoulder to shoulder with me in battle, and looked death in the face, has forever torn down the barriers that bourgeois social order had once erected between him and me.

While visiting a friend at a Reichswehr military training ground, I had the opportunity to see the officers' club there.

Only one painting adorned the vast room: it depicted the unknown soldier charging forward on the front lines.

Deeply moved, I stood before this impressive symbol.

The commander of the base, who had banished all old commemorative images from the hall and placed only this one in their stead, could not have expressed the sanctity of the frontline experience more poignantly.

The simple gray hero, whose name and rank no one knows, has supplanted the illustrious bearers of resounding names and lofty ranks.

Only a true leader of the front, who carries in his heart the sublime, awe-inspiring, and jubilant experience of enduring watch and raging storms, could present this image to the men who are called upon to preserve and enhance the legacy of a heroic army that defied a sea of iron and blood.

Only a leader, the true exemplar of an officer, who in the dirt and mud, in smoke and fire, became one with all the sons of German soil who followed his banner!

To argue whether the achievements of the officer or those of the man in the field are to be valued more highly is certainly futile; but there can be no doubt that the man in the field had to endure greater exertions and privations.

The sacrifices made by the working class and the peasantry, in light of the fact that the state demanded only from them and gave nothing in return, must be regarded as comparatively greater. 15 275 Never and nowhere, of course, have social classes been more pitifully cheated of the fruits of their labor than the working classes of the people by a system that has gained a foothold under the false slogan of "equality and dignity."

On this point, just one question: Would a civil servant under the monarchy have dared to address the humblest man in the manner and form in which so-called New German civil servants today presume to address him in the essential offices—primarily those tax and housing offices that are proliferating in this state—which are riddled with red and black beneficiaries of the system?

Or would a people's government, conscious of its responsibility, allow the rude and arrogant behavior of certain Free State police forces protecting the republic to go unpunished?

Or would a people's government conscious of its responsibility allow the rude and arrogant behavior of

certain Free State police forces, which protect the republic, to go unpunished?

The “infamous monarchical system” would have driven such elements to hell; it was only in the stifling atmosphere of the modern democratic realm of dignity, brotherhood, and party membership that this top dog could flourish.

Before the elections, the upstart bigwig pretended to be a friend of the people and the workers; at the trough, he knows only himself and “denies his brother.”

Even among patriotic beer-drinkers, it has become fashionable these days to utter the phrase that one “must struggle for the soul of the worker.”

I wanted to be a brother and friend to the worker, the common man, in reality.

I did not intend to express the often-praised camaraderie in words, but to prove it through deeds.

I rejected the standard that social standing and education—such as the graduation exam from a humanities-oriented high school—or even one’s wallet are significant for a man’s social standing and honor.

The question could only be: Are you a German with heart and hand, and ready to live and die for the fatherland? Then you are my comrade and partner in honor.

If you are not, then I deny you respect and honor.

I wanted to serve a people of fighters, not a people of poets and dreamers: a people that, in my view, by today’s standards, has more faults than so-called virtues.

With this resolve, I stepped out into freedom and political life.

II.

Fighter of the People’s Front 31.

Member of the German Reichstag.

An idea cannot be crushed by rubber truncheons.

It was not only Kahr’s Bavaria; all of democratic Germany attempted to crush the Völkisch Movement at the turn of 1923 and 1924.

Out of struggle, hardship, and oppression, it rose in the spring of 1924, more proud and stronger than ever.

The Hitler trial, which for weeks drew the attention of the entire world, had prepared the ground for it in the hearts of those of German sentiment; the movement had taken root among the entire people.

The election to the Bavarian State Parliament, which took place on April 6, 1924, under the influence of the trial, gave eloquent expression to this popular sentiment.

Shortly thereafter, hundreds of thousands throughout the German fatherland also declared their allegiance to the national movement: on May 4, 1924, I was elected to the Reichstag as a representative of the National Socialist Freedom Party along with 31 other nationalist friends.

The noble legacy that the men who had stood before the court at the War Academy had laid at the movement's foundation now had to be preserved and promoted.

Forming a political movement out of the large number of supporters and friends was the great task that now awaited a solution.

In this context, the deputies were tasked with serving as intermediaries between the leadership and the men who directed the development and organization of the movement in the German districts, and with leading the struggle on the front lines.

The question of whether it was right for the Völkisch movement to enter parliament has, of course, been much debated.

In my opinion, it cannot be dismissed simply by pointing to the failures and fragmentation that became particularly evident in the Bavarian State Parliament in 1924 and in the Second Reichstag in 1924.

The reasons for this lie in the same teething troubles that have plagued the entire Völkisch movement since its emergence and its unexpected rise to power.

I consider it misguided to infer from these manifestations the necessity of renouncing any representation in the public bodies that currently play a decisive and determining role in state life.

I considered Hitler's decision—which he made during our joint imprisonment at the War Academy—to agree to the dispatch of national representatives to the parliaments to be correct.

I would like to add here: I am of the opinion that now that the step has been taken, we must stick to it even if the decision made back then is now considered incorrect.

Above all, the decision must not be definitively revoked at a time when the opposition could attribute it to the failure of the Völkisch representatives in the popular assemblies.

I believe that these developmental difficulties must and can be overcome just as the trials and tribulations that still shook the Völkisch Movement until 1928 were.

But it is precisely my work in the Reichstag itself that has convinced me of the necessity for the Nationalist Movement as a whole to send its own representatives to the legislative bodies.

For to believe that any party would be willing and able to take on the task of safeguarding ethnic interests is a childish belief.

Some have considered entrusting this representation to, for example, the German National People's Party.

Whether this proposal can still be considered justified from a national perspective following the

adoption of the Dawes Report on August 29, 1924, and the extension of the Republic Protection Act on May 17, 1927, I must doubt.

I will return to the German National Party as such later.

In this context, it suffices to note in advance that the German National Party's conception of the nature of the national community and of socialism is fundamentally different from the doctrine of the völkisch worldview.

If it is therefore futile and wrong to believe that the Völkisch idea could be enforced by sending representatives of existing political parties to the legislative bodies, the only choice remaining is either to fundamentally renounce these representatives in the parliaments or to take the representation into our own hands.

Here I must address the common objection that the Völkisch movement opposes parliamentarianism, and that it is therefore a contradiction to enter parliament oneself.

I can only respond by pointing to the Communists, who are certainly no less hostile to the modern parliamentary system than the Nationalists.

And I cannot resist taking a swipe here at the so-called "non-partisans," who are usually very proud of this very trait.

Upon closer examination, a lack of courage almost always emerges as the driving force behind this "politically astute" course of action.

In my simple way of thinking, I believe that in the affairs of practical life, one must not lose oneself in idealistic heavens, but must reckon with given facts.

A weakness peculiar to the nationalists is that they always walk with dreamy eyes toward a bright national future, completely forgetting that in this world, in which we happen to live, we must face the "determined minority" with a very sober struggle≠ 278 "determined minority" versus the "sluggish and stupid masses," one will not be able to evade answering this question.

One must seek the reason within oneself and not in others.

It is not the people who are stupid for not understanding the great ideas of the national and ethnic leaders, and they therefore deserve it if they must forgo the good fortune of being led by these men.

No, it is precisely some "leaders" who have robbed the people of their faith and trust in the lofty national ideals to which, as has been shown, they are receptive.

In today's Germany, there are far too many leaders and far too many clever people.

Everyone wants to be a leader; no one wants to be led.

Even "leaders" who have completely failed and squandered everything refuse to understand this and still play along.

The question of whether the path to German freedom must not run over the heads of some so-called leaders is now pressing itself upon us.

A certain nationalist press takes pleasure in repeatedly attacking and belittling people who, in terms of their views, should actually be close to them, and who merely believe they must take a different path, but toward a similar or even identical goal.

On the other hand, the law-abiding citizen reads in the mainstream Jewish press—which he cannot avoid at all, because he sometimes needs it for business and because it is constantly and everywhere right under his nose—nothing but scorn, mockery, and contempt for the nationalist movement, which has turned in on itself.

Finally, there is the fact that man cannot live by ideals alone, but must be concerned with securing his economic well-being and must seek this where he sees a firm, united power, not a powerless movement that has no time at all to represent his interests because it is exhausted by internal strife.

As long as nationalist and patriotic leaders continue to march in this direction, we are doomed to powerlessness.

Differences in attitude regarding the path and the goal will certainly not be resolved by insulting one another and fighting.

In the struggle over methods and issues, we overlook the fact that we are drifting further and further away from our goal.

This goal—the seizure of power—can only be achieved through unity.

Our opponents know and respect the power of our idea.

Nevertheless, though each of them, acting alone, is more powerful and stronger than our entire movement, they have joined hands across ideological divides to subjugate and oppress us.

In November 1918, when the instruments of power were not in our hands, the united international enemy dealt us a crushing defeat from which we have only slowly and with great difficulty recovered over many years.

That same enemy has now secured the instruments of state power and intends to strike the final, devastating blow.

Without the means of power, we stand before him today almost defenseless. 250 May we struggle to find a way?

The German is always chasing after illusions.

And in doing so, he overlooks the fact that in this world, only power decides.

The Frenchman had the cowards and mutineers ruthlessly shot on the battlefield; in Germany, people pondered why these scoundrels were running away, and then pitied and pardoned them.

The Frenchman declared simply during the war: The fight will continue until Germany is brought to its knees.

Meanwhile, in Germany, people argued about who our real enemy was.

At one point it was the hereditary enemy, the French; then Russian imperialism; then the cry was again: Down with England!

Some people still don't know today!

Even now, people pore over files and make bombastic speeches about who is to blame for the war.

Of course, only in Germany!

The rest of the world couldn't care less: The victor is always right, the vanquished is always wrong.

That is how it has always been, and that is how it will likely remain—despite beauty and dignity.

At the end of 1927, I was in a Franconian town where a man who had emigrated to America—and who had fought against us in the American army during the war—had been warmly welcomed back.

In that Negro tribe, the lad would have been torn to pieces had he dared to return to his betrayed homeland.

He was even admired by his German compatriots.

The undignified admiration of foreign lands has always been the most telling testimony in German history of advanced national decay.

The foreigner is honored in Germany even when he counts for nothing in his own homeland.

When the war profiteer Levine was flown from America to Berlin by the first transatlantic pilot, Chamberlin, as useless ballast, "official" Germany hailed him as a "hero."

The highest dignitaries of the republic paid him tribute and expressed their admiration.

The Americans, however, cut ties with the enterprising "compatriot," and the authorities put him on trial for a few embarrassing matters.

As long as we tolerate traitors to the people in our midst, as long as people who know no homeland called Germany are appointed representatives of the sovereign people, as long as we fawn over and run after foreigners, there is so much practical work to be done in Germany that one can safely put those sky-high ideals on the back burner.

I am the last person who would advocate for unity without ideas.

Many zeros still do not make a one, nor do they make unity and harmony.

And nationalist station command posts do not become assault battalions either.

But the fighters belong on the front lines. 281 The talkers must be silenced; the men alone must decide.

Political deserters and gossiping women of both sexes must be weeded out; they hinder and harm when it comes to fighting.

The nationalist idea has taken root in German lands, even in the most remote village.

But now let the bugle call sound and the assembly horn be blown!

Nationalist warriors, to the roll call! Close ranks in the movement that has boldly unfurled the banner and is leading you into battle! Then you will truly be the invincible power! As the situation stands today (summer 1928), two centers of power stand at the forefront of the nationalist and patriotic movement: on the political front, the R.

S.

D.

A.

P., and in the defense movement, “Der Stahlhelm.”

Is it really not possible that, over time, a united front will emerge to defend against our common enemies?

The N.

S.

D.

A.

P.

Is the most clearly defined political representation of those who reject this state today, the shock troops of the Röllian movement?

Could this fact not be taken into account—without compromising our principles?

But we must put an end to leadership pretensions.

The personal ambition of the leaders, and even more so that of the women to whom they are subservient, must take a back seat.

The front of the fighters on the outside must find its mirror image in a united front within the people’s assemblies.

I have personally experienced that this goal is attainable.

The deputies of the National Socialist Freedom Party in the first Reichstag of 1924, through comradely cooperation, accomplished much good for the entire national movement.

As proof that properly selected men can be of the greatest benefit to the movement in this capacity, I would like to mention the deputy Dr.

Frick, the best parliamentarian in the original sense of the word that the Nationalist Movement has today; Mr. von Graefe succeeded with skill in banishing the internal divisions that had already arisen frequently in my time and in leading the faction with unity through the battles it had to face in the Reichstag against the united front of its opponents.

Alongside these men, Feder, Fritsch, von Ramin, Count zu Reventlow, and Wulle stood out in particular—all respected and proven Völkisch pioneers.

I am aware that such thoughts will cause consternation among many of my nationalist friends.

But I cannot help it.

As far as radical mindset, activity, and direction are concerned, I could probably only be surpassed by a few.

I still profess myself today to be the same nationalist and National Socialist that I was four or more years ago.

However, the ultimate success of the movement seems to me to be guaranteed only by a unification of the entire nationalist front.

And I believe that the realization of even divergent views is more likely to be achieved precisely in this way and guarantees success more quickly than individual advancement.

As is well known, Schiller, in his “William Tell,” contrasted the statement “The strong are most powerful alone” with the opposite: “United, even the weak become powerful.” I believe that we take reality into account better if we, first of all, do not overestimate our strength.

We stand almost defenseless against any oppression of the Nationalist Movement.

The fact that those currently in power are taking full advantage of this defenselessness should actually serve as a sign to seek ways to escape this isolation and helplessness.

To this end, I see only one path: that of alliance, the unified consolidation of revolutionary forces.

This must be pursued, even if it does not sound like blaring fanfares.

It seems to me there will be plenty of time for fanfare once success has been achieved.

During my campaign as a candidate for the Reichstag and the few speeches I gave before the election —such as in Ansbach, where, at the urging of my old school friend Dr.

Eins, I pointed out that I would enter the Reichstag as a representative of the front-line soldiers.

In the Reichstag itself, I took the floor only once, amid the delightful uproar of the Communists, on May 28, 1924, to demand the release of my comrade, Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, from detention in Landsberg. Of the motions I submitted to the parliamentary group to safeguard the rights of front-line soldiers, which were approved and presented to the Reichstag, I wish to reproduce one here: The Reichstag be resolved: to request the Reich Government to immediately submit a bill granting those who fought their way through the enemy lines with their blood the privileges within the state that they have earned.

These privileges shall consist of: a) preferential consideration in the filling of offices, etc.

in the Reich, in the states, and in the municipalities.

Given equal merit and qualifications, the front-line soldier shall always have precedence over other applicants.

The dismissal of civil servants, employees, and workers shall be handled accordingly.

B) In the general granting of double voting rights in elections to the legislative bodies of the Reich and the states, as well as to the public self-governing bodies.

E) State protection and state support for organizations of front-line combatants. 283 d) A law that places decorations earned in the face of the enemy under special protection and punishes their disparagement or denigration with severe penalties.

E) In a regulation that makes it possible to compensate for demonstrable hardships and injustices that arose in connection with promotion or awards in the field.

J) In a comprehensive reform and improvement of the provisions for the victims of war.

This includes the following: 1.

For war participants who have suffered material loss due to injury or illness in the field (so-called war invalids), 2.

For combatants who have suffered material hardship due to their service at the front, 3.

For the survivors of those who fell in the field of battle or were killed in action (war orphans, war widows, war widowers).

Other motions called for the establishment of a commission of inquiry for prisoners of war, advocacy for Ruhr fighters deported to French penal institutions, etc.

No one will be surprised when I note that not a single one of these motions was brought up for discussion in the plenary session of the Reichstag.

In the circles of German representatives, people do not like to hear about the front-line soldiers.

And now, privileges for these people—that's the last thing we need!

In Germany, the course of events during and after the war has always been determined solely by those who fought at home, and that is how it must remain!

The front-line soldiers, the fools, are allowed to bleed and die out there for the profit of the slave-drivers and money-lenders; in politics, they have no say, for they understand nothing of it.

There are, of course, still states, such as

B.

Turkey, which admittedly do not enjoy true and perfect democracy, that reward front-line soldiers with outstanding posts as ambassadors and

the like

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But a representative body that has to preserve the noble legacy of a war of liberation and a civil war revolt rejects these reactionary conditions.

Among the people, especially in the so-called leading classes, one often hears the widespread view that parliamentarians are all mere windbags.

This view is fundamentally wrong and dangerous.

Nor is the assertion that the prerequisite for suitability as a member of parliament is roughly the same as the former requirement for the Hartschser examination in Bavaria—namely, being able to sleep on one side for 24 hours without turning over—correct.

Parliamentarians hold power today; they are aware of this power and exploit it to the fullest.

In their quest to consolidate their power, all representatives are united across all parties.

Their quest for power is limited only by the constraints imposed on them by economic and financial considerations.

Do I need to remind you in this context of Bauer, Höfle, and all the rest?

Or bring to mind the name of the patron Barmat? 284 I say: The parliamentarians are not merely idle talkers; they know all too well what they want.

But they do not push this through in the plenary session of the Reichstag.

The speeches delivered there before a mostly empty crowd are meant for the stupid people.

They can read about it in the newspaper; the Volksboten aren't interested in such things.

When a representative of their party has to take the floor, they stay briefly in the chamber and do their paperwork there, spicing up the remarks from time to time with the prescribed “very true,” without letting themselves be disturbed in their own private business.

After all, everything has already been negotiated and decided in the committees, so there can be no pleasant surprises.

The necessary votes then provide some variety, though even those have already been predetermined.

The true parliamentarian is firmly convinced that he is a superior being and that he towers far above the masses of the people.

To this mass of the sovereign people, he grants—provided that his own election is not thereby endangered—only one fundamental right: stupidity.

This fundamental right is the only right in Germany that cannot be suspended, even temporarily, by Article 48 of the Reich Constitution.

Moreover, the modern representative of the people takes the position: Only the foolish man has principles; I am a modern man and I change.

This is the German Reichstag, the supreme representative body of the free German people.

The parliaments of the individual states are no different.

Anyone entering the “House” for the first time will be amazed by the minds and figures that make Germany’s laws here, and will then no longer be surprised by them.

Legal jargon and sophistry, political horse-trading, fleeting glances and words—nothing but words—dominate the chamber.

The parties appoint the best orators as their leaders and those of the people.

Men of action and strong personalities have no place here.

But it is not worth wasting many words on the parties.

They certainly do not, without exception, strive for what is written in the election appeals and party platforms.

The wretched people, who have to pay the price, the misera contribuens plebs, must, on the other hand, accept these words of wisdom with faith.

Just as 200 years ago, the people’s elected representatives grant them only panem et circenses, bread and circuses.

They will not tolerate any concern with matters that extend beyond the horizon of a soccer club.

Given the brevity of the time I have spent in the Reichstag, I do not presume to offer a detailed value judgment on the individual parties.

I can only convey the impressions I have gained during this time.

First of all, it is one of the peculiarities of the German Republic that patriotism is—and indeed must be—incorporated into the realm of party political programs.

In other countries, it is a matter of course as the common good of all parties, a foundation shared by all political factions.

To be specific: Despite the severe disappointments it has repeatedly caused to those with a nationalist outlook, the German National People's Party is the party that deserves the most careful attention from a national standpoint.

In its ranks stand many upright German men who love their fatherland no less fervently than we Nationalists and National Socialists.

Their will is undoubtedly national.

That the party, on decisive issues, e.

e.g.,

the acceptance of the Dawes Plan, has repeatedly failed, I have tried to explain this by saying that the party, in short, can be compared to a Janus-faced figure.

A large and, for the time being, probably still decisive portion of its representatives looks primarily backward and desires the restoration of institutions and conditions that once were. This older generation is opposed by a younger, forward-looking one that has not yet been able to assert itself decisively.

The reconciliation of these two tendencies must, as the parliamentary machinery dictates, usually be sought on a platform that does not alienate either side. This "broad national base," the search for the "lesser evil" and the "middle ground," naturally stands in the way of truly fruitful work.

The party cannot draw the necessary conclusions in the struggle against the Weimar state and for the German people's state in this manner.

Therefore, this task remains the preserve of the "nationalist opposition."

The purpose of this opposition—"the most loyal opposition to His Majesty," as the English say—is by no means negation on principle.

Rather, it is an indispensable support and aid for a government and popular representation serving the national interest.

One more word on the monarchist stance of this party, which has legally established the extension of the law for the protection of the republic.

The contradiction here is glaringly apparent.

One cannot be a monarchist “at heart” and at the same time wave the flag of the Republic with one’s fist.

The question of the form of government is a matter of principle, not of tactics.

Those who, based on historical insights, hold the view that the republican form of government is not suitable for the German people must fundamentally reject the consolidation of this system. 286 The fact that one may hold differing views regarding the future form and the timing of the restoration of the monarchy has nothing to do with this.

Thrones abandoned without a fight can only be reclaimed through struggle, not by parliamentary resolution or referendum.

The prince who goes into battle alongside his comrades and, as a liberator, reclaims the crown of his fathers in a free fatherland will be a German duke and king.

Not the fawning sycophants who abandoned their masters in November 1918, but only the rugged fighters can be the comrades-in-arms who guide the prince up the steep path to the heart of the people and to the steps of the throne.

The strongest republican party, the Social Democratic Party, interests me particularly because it still brings together—even today—the most valuable forces of the people, above all the working class.

To deny this would be foolish; but that does not prevent me from opposing the doctrines of Marxism and their proponents as a bitter enemy.

To wrest the masses of the working people, who still follow Social Democracy today, from the un-German leadership of Marxism is, in fact, the very question of life and death for the German people.

A Frenchman once said: “I love German social democracy because I wish the plague upon Germany.” The worker still lives today under the delusion that his economic interests find their most effective representation in this organization.

Of course, it cannot be the goal of social democracy to fundamentally improve the lot of the worker; for the discontent of the masses is, after all, the prerequisite for its existence.

To make the worker forget his economic worries, social democracy masterfully knows how to steer the masses’ attention from time to time in a direction that might actually be of no concern to the people who want bread.

The concepts of republic, imperial inheritance, etc.

are always subjected to passionate debate, and a fierce struggle is always waged over these “fundamental rights” of the people whenever workers and ordinary folk are suffering and are forced to realize that, despite their Social Democratic party membership, they cannot feed themselves.

The Marxist leaders know just as well as the “bourgeois” parties, who are happy to pick up this ball, that these questions cannot be resolved today.

Nor will the colors of the Reich be determined by the Reichstag or the Reich Art Commissioner, but by the victorious army that shattered the Treaty of Versailles.

Whether the representatives of the Nationalist faction, who have recently united under Winnig’s leadership in the “old Social Democratic Party,” will completely renounce Marxist ideas and follow purely German paths remains to be seen.

I do not believe so.

The realization that our homeland has become “alienated” must, in any case, be followed by a struggle against the leaders and proponents of this alienation.

But that is out of the question.

The Center Party and the Bavarian

People’s Party, like the Social Democrats, depend exclusively on the judgment of the masses.

If the worker believes his economic interests are well protected in the “Workers’ Party of the Working People,” then the Catholic is convinced that his faith and his worldview are defended only in the Catholic People’s Party.

He does not reflect on the fact that his religious commitment serves the political bargaining of a party, nor does he learn of it, since nothing about it appears in the press, which he, as a good Catholic, is obliged to read.

The Communist Party appeals above all to the young, revolutionary proletariat.

It is not insignificant that in 1924, no fewer than 9 of the 15 youngest members of the Reichstag belonged to the Communist Party. (Of the remaining 6, 5 were Völlische, 1 was a German Nationalist!) In our rejection of the current state, we mostly found ourselves in agreement with the Communists.

I can recall remarks by the Communist speaker on foreign policy that I could have almost entirely endorsed; only the Communist’s conclusion was: “Therefore, on to the Völkisch struggle for freedom!”

“Therefore, on to the world revolution!”

I have always regretted that the Zuden play a decisive role in the party, for the German worker who gave himself over to the delusion that he could fight for a better fate alongside these comrades-in-arms.

After all, I hold the heretical view that the revolutionary school of communism does a better job of winning over the German worker to the national struggle for freedom than the purely idealistic work of subversion carried out by the social-democratic bourgeoisie.

I am completely alien to the German People’s Party.

I cannot muster any sympathy for this kind of “national politics,” which finds its visible expression in the name of Stresemann.

My position is perhaps best illustrated by a remark I made to a friend after the Reichstag convened: “That there are 62 communists in the German Reichstag is understandable and tolerable; but it is hopeless that the German people have elected 44 members of the German People’s Party as their representatives.” I shall refrain from commenting on the Democrats.

Despite being in the minority, the party provided the largest number of ministers, proof that today people can tolerate anything but “men of action.”

I know only one thing: on the day that a true German Reichstag is elected, in which not a single Democrat remains, Germany will be saved.

Intolerable liberalism has led Germany to the brink of the abyss; its complete eradication will ensure its rebirth. 238 The Economic Party, by its very existence, proves the eternal truth of Goethe’s words in *Faust*: “With words one can argue endlessly, with words one can construct a system.

So stick to words!” It claims to serve only economic interests and to resolve these issues, a task the old political parties have failed to accomplish.

Political fatigue, dissatisfaction with the political parties, and the longing for relief from economic hardships create fertile ground for the acceptance of this party.

The honest citizens therefore flock like flies to the sticky traps it has laid out.

I doubt that the majority of voters, who are blindly following this party’s policies with increasing enthusiasm, will find any joy in them.

The Economic Party can easily be placed in the same category as the Democratic Party in terms of aimlessness and empty rhetoric, as it is essentially a rehash of that notorious Constitutional Party in a form that is by no means improved.

All in all: none of the political parties can or will keep their promises.

The office of representative has today become a profession, like so many others.

To better fulfill the duties of his high office, the German representative gladly accepts financial security.

On the supervisory boards, the Social Democrat sits peacefully alongside the German Nationalist.

It is hard to imagine that this economic bond will lead the representatives of the people to devote all their energy to improving the social situation of workers and employees, which would result in a reduction in dividends.

Parliament, of course, will never save Germany.

Parliamentarism is incapable of any great deed. “The inadequate here will be the event!” If one wants

Germany’s freedom, one should and must be a declared and bitter enemy of this institution and fight against it. 32.

The Front Banner.

Upon graduating from the War Academy, Hitler and Krie≠bel handed me documents granting me unrestricted authority to rebuild the defense movement.

Although they would be essential for understanding what follows, I shall refrain from disclosing them for special reasons.

The task I now faced was a great one: I was to turn the associations banned and shattered by Kahr back into a combat-ready instrument of the movement. 19 Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 289 The nationalist idea had not been crushed by Kahr; it had taken a firm hold among the entire people.

The process of uniting them into a unified political movement had been set in motion; it fell to me to provide this emerging political power with a strong defense movement as its backbone and support.

I reserved the decision as to how I would fulfill my task until I had gained a personal impression of the situation outside.

After all, I had been cut off from the world for five months and could only form my own picture from reports and newspaper articles.

I had always detested decisions made from behind a desk.

Thus, the first weeks of my freedom were filled with meetings and visits; it was a time of enlightenment and exploration.

First Lieutenant Gerhard von Prosch, who had resigned from the state police due to the events of November 9, 1923, stood by my side as a trusted assistant.

I had come to particularly appreciate him in Stadelbeim for his manly and honest character.

Today he is active in Turkey, since the ungrateful fatherland has no place for such men, while his former assistant, the capable Melzl, who after November 9

had to give up his profession as a Reichswehr soldier, has even turned to Persia and is now working there for the German cause.

My inquiries extended in various directions.

I first inquired with the Bavarian state government whether they were willing to lift the ban on the Kamp organizations.

If they were inclined to agree to this without having to deny the nature of the combat groups, then I wanted to revive them in their old form, only in a tighter union.

If not, then a completely new path would simply have to be taken.

My negotiations were complicated by the fact that sub-associations of the Kampfbund, particularly the Oberlandführers, had already entered into negotiations with the government and the Reichswehr.

Following the principle of “divide and conquer,” the government naturally preferred to negotiate with the individual associations rather than with the top leadership.

Added to this was the fact that it wanted to establish an organization within the “Nolbann” itself, in which it was determined to absorb all defense associations under its authority.

It initially entrusted the leadership of the Notbann to General von Epp, in the hope that the pull of his personality and his name would paralyze all other associations.

The general initially accepted this position but later, presumably after gaining a deeper understanding of the situation, stepped down from the role.

The government’s reasoning was, in retrospect, correct.

As long as I was in active military service, my aspiration was the same.

At the present time, however, it was clear to me that the goals of the Bavarian state government could not be reconciled with those of the people.

Thus, I could not lend a hand to making our best combat-ready forces available for a purpose alien to our nature, and therefore forbade membership in the Notbann.

The decision was not an easy one for me, as, given the situation in Bavaria, it meant for this region the loss of benefits that only cooperation with the government could offer.

For the sake of humor, it should be noted that during the negotiations, the position was seriously put forward that “anyone not in the Notbann may not participate in the future struggle for liberation!” However, the decision would only succeed if the Notbann could be pitted against fully organized formations.

This was, however, thwarted by the special tour already initiated by Von Oberland.

My friend Dr.

Weber wanted to make important decisions from his prison cell in Landsberg; his deputies Meyding and Alzheimer believed that Oberland’s independent course of action would bring their association more success than a united front of the forces formerly united in the Kampfbund.

A split was avoided for the time being.

The Altreich flag, which the energetic Lieutenant Liebel had established in Nuremberg after the November Days (including a local group in Munich that was to carry on the tradition of the Reichskriegsflagge), immediately came under my leadership without reservation.

In Munich, Augsburg, Nuremberg, and later also in Memmingen, I was able to welcome many loyal

comrades.

Soon after my release, Lieutenant Dechant, the chief of staff of the Reichskriegsflagge under Heiß, attempted to reunite the divided organization.

However, after all that had transpired, General Ludendorff could not agree to Captain Heiß remaining in his leadership position.

The reunification of the shattered, once-powerful organization was thus not possible.

Here a brief overview of the other organizations in the Reich, insofar as I have not yet touched upon them, should be inserted: Of the three major organizations—Stahlhelm, Jungdeutscher Orden, and Wehrwolf—the latter, led by Kloppe, is perhaps closest to the völkisch worldview.

The leader of the Jungdo, Mahraun, is striving to chart new political paths for his association.

I must remain skeptical as to whether these are the right paths until full clarity regarding the ultimate goal can be achieved.

Under the leadership of Seldte and Düsterberg, whose merits are undisputed, the Stahlhelm has grown into the strongest organization of front-line soldiers.

In terms of the number and nature of its followers, it certainly represents a formidable force.

On the other hand, I see in the renunciation of the uniformly demanded commitment to a shared worldview an attitude that cannot satisfy revolutionary nationalist aspirations.

Of the associations that shape and sustain the youth movement, I would single out only the Schillian spirit of the ever-energetic First Lieutenant Rossbach.

In them lies the future of young Germany; as far as I can see, work is being done here whose fruits one can look forward to with joyful anticipation.

Before I took a closer look at a possible reorganization of the SA, whose leadership Hitler had likewise entrusted to me, I had in-depth discussions with Captain Göring, whom I sought out during his exile in Innsbruck in 1929, and with First Lieutenant Roßbach, who was active in Salzburg.

The result of these discussions was that Göring personally appointed me as his deputy in the leadership and granted me unlimited authority.

Roßbach joined me as chief of staff for the SA unit that was to be disbanded.

Step aside.

On the 17th

And 18

May, a major SA leadership meeting took place in Salzburg.

which I presided over.

The participants in the meeting had come from all districts of Germany and Austria; many disagreements, conflicts, and ambiguities had to be resolved.

There I issued provisional guidelines for the reorganization of the SA, whose structure corresponded to that later adopted for the Frontbann.

I reserved the right to appoint the leaders in Germany and Austria.

The successful conference concluded impressively at the Hohen≠salzburg Fortress.

On May 10

and 11 May

There was a grand, uplifting rally, the German Day in Halle.

Some 20,000 participants had gathered there. 3,900 flags fluttered on the parade ground, which His Excellency Ludendorff inspected.

The national associations had taken up quarters in Merseburg, where I spoke in four halls on the evening of the 10th.

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Count von Helldorss emerged for the first time as a nationalist leader on that occasion.

General Ludendorff singled out the nationalist associations for special recognition.

Shortly after my appearance in the Reichstag in Berlin, I had the opportunity, through discussions with Captain von Heydebreck, the successful Freikorps leader and leader of the National Socialist Combat Associations of Berlin, and with representatives from East Prussia, Bremen, etc.,

about the situation in Northern Germany.

Through my close contact with His Excellency Ludendorff, I was also able to learn his views.

At the end of all these discussions and inquiries, I decided to found the Frontbann.

It was to grow out of the street-level organizations that still existed in the Reich, and new units in the places where the combat units had been disbanded.

I gave up on attempts to secure the reinstatement of the disbanded units.

I would have preferred the complete dissolution of all the sub-units. 5 Out of respect for tradition and custom, I refrained from taking this measure.

I wanted to be the sole responsible leader; neither General Tündenors, nor Adolf Hitler, nor Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel should be burdened by the Frontbann.

The name “Frontbann” occurred to me on a trip to Landsberg on May 31.

There

There I informed Hitler, Kriebel, and Weber of my plan, without encountering any opposition.

In meetings in Augsburg and Nuremberg on May 31

and June 1

I immediately put my plan into action and appointed the provisional leaders for the local units. 292 I also found complete agreement with the political leader in Nuremberg, Julius Streicher, the ruthless and tireless National Socialist pioneer.

In mid-June, I visited Landsberg twice more.

Hitler had some objections; I sensed that, in his seclusion, he would find it difficult to make a decision.

Finally, Kriebel pointed out that, as the authorized leader, I would simply have to handle the matter as I saw fit, and Hitler, too, gave me a free hand in carrying it out.

Ludendorff and von Graefe, who were also with me in Landsberg and discussed the political organization with Hitler in my presence from a broad perspective, were likewise unable to elicit a decisive statement from Hitler.

We therefore all left Landsberg dissatisfied.

Now it was imperative to act without delay: both the political and the military organization had to be put into concrete form.

The men were there; if they could not be organized immediately, the psychological moment would be missed and they would disperse again.

Hitler, it seemed to me, did not want to relinquish his decisive influence on the one hand, but on the other hand, he did not consider it tactically wise to assume responsibility outwardly, so as not to jeopardize the restoration of his political freedom of movement.

It was against this backdrop that he ultimately resigned himself to the situation: without appointing any representatives or deputies, he left the Völkische Bewegung to its own devices and ceased to participate in meetings or correspondence.

Ludendorff now took over the leadership with resolute dedication.

For the time being, he left me free to build up the military organization according to my plans.

I found little sympathy or interest among the political representatives.

Both the Reichstag faction and the Bavarian State Parliament viewed the Wehrverband as a kind of troublesome competition they would have preferred to do without.

Only a few members of the Reichstag showed understanding and support for my efforts.

Despite all resistance and every attempt to thwart me, however, I was determined to carry out the task entrusted to me on my own responsibility.

At the Franconian Day in Marktbreit on July 6

In addition to General Ludendorff, Hermann Esser and Julius Streicher were also present.

A capable member joined the Franconia League.

On July 10

A detailed discussion among all the Munich leaders took place under the chairmanship of General Ludendorff, during which I outlined my goals and received General Ludendorff's full approval.

Oberland under Meyding and Alzheimer definitively parted ways with us on this day and declared their intention to go their own way.

For Austria, I reached an agreement through the party leadership in Vienna.

I appointed the magnificent Captain Brosche as Reichsführer East.

Brosche was an Austrian officer and a long-standing member of the R.

K.

F.

Mün≠ chen.

At the party congress of the Austrian National Socialists in Salzburg on March 2, 1924, he presented to me the robust assault units of the "Vaterländischen Schützbund."

On the occasion of this conference, I took the opportunity to lay a wreath at the heroes' grave of the Archduke Ralner Regiment in the presence of the Völkische Sturmkolonnen.

In doing so, I expressed the German officer's deep admiration for the heroic deeds of our allies.

I also spoke at the party convention, which proceeded unanimously and successfully.

In the weeks that followed, I gave the Bavarian Minister of the Interior a detailed account of what I intended to do.

It was, of course, clear to me that a minister of the Bavarian People's Party would not support our

efforts; at the very least, I hoped to achieve a benevolent neutrality on the part of the Bavarian state government.

Meanwhile, the organization was making progress throughout the state and the entire empire.

In Augsburg, Hof, Amberg, and Nuremberg, I was able to personally lay the organizational groundwork.

In Munich, the so-called memorial ceremony was held at that time, organized by Dr.

Pittinger.

In memory of the land wrested from us by the enemy, a “memorial” was erected; at the same time, the Lord of Hosts was implored to restore the stolen territories to us by virtue of His almighty power.

His Majesty the King unfortunately allowed himself to be persuaded to bestow the royal blessing upon this ceremony.

On his side, Dr.

Ritter von Kahr (Captain of the

L.

A.

D.) led a march-past after the ceremony.

The “pilgrims” who passed by the Residenz here did not present an overwhelming sight.

The combatants were almost entirely absent.

In contrast, one could see from a distance that quite a few of those in uniform had spent the World War in some kind of administrative office.

Nevertheless, this solemn commemoration of the dead at the Feldherrnhalle, which was marked by Kahr’s presence, aroused indignation in all popular circles.

At the same time, the rift between King Rupprecht and General Ludendorff, which had already arisen during the war and intensified in November 1923, found its way into broader public consciousness.

I was well aware that forces were at work here that were thwarting any unifying mediation.

On the one hand, these were the very men who had been involved in organizing the memorial ceremony.

For this reason, I requested an audience at the Leuchtenberg Palace, which was granted to me on January 8, 1924.

To my delight, I was able to ascertain that it was not the Highest Wisdom's intention to involve the officers in the personal dispute between the two German military leaders, and that the King did not view General Ludendorff's loyalty as a betrayal against himself.

When I was a guest at the German Nationalist Officers' Association that evening, opinions clashed sharply; some of the officers attributed the blame for the public airing of the differences to King Rupprecht. 294 I therefore took the floor to correct false statements regarding the King's intentions.

The "Völkischer Kurier" of August 8, 1924, No. 157, reported on this. 8 I had hoped to have paved the way for a compromise.

But this attempt met with strong opposition in the king's inner circle.

Events then took a course that I was unfortunately unable to prevent.

The German Day in Weimar on August 16–17, 1924, was a milestone in the development of the Frontbann.

While the unification of the Völkisch Movement was announced in the historic theater hall under the chairmanship of Ludendorff, I was able to found the "Center" group of the Frontbann together with the Central German leaders.

The main credit here goes to the young Count Oelldorss and his chief of staff, Lieutenant Baron von Eberstein.

With the full commitment of their persons and their abilities, they created something exemplary and were my most loyal helpers and friends in my work until the very end.

The personal sacrifices that Count Helldorss in particular made, not only for the Wehrverband but for the entire National Socialist movement, will always be a source of pride for him.

The campaign later launched against the two Front Commanders by certain quarters, merely because they were officers and members of the nobility, lacked any justification.

Outstanding leaders joined the ranks of the Frontbande.

August 17

took an uplifting turn.

In the morning, the units had assembled at the airfield, where General Ludendorff delivered a speech and consecrated the flags.

In the afternoon, the columns marched to the theater for a large rally, at which Dr.

Dinter, the leader of the Thuringian N.

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P., rallied the crowd in support of General Ludendorff.

The magnificent celebration concluded with a brisk “Forward!” march past the army and division commanders.

A few days later, I had the good fortune to accompany the general on an East Prussian inspection tour together with Captain von Heydebreck.

I got to know the unique and proud German people who guard the borders of the Reich there.

But the journey continued via Insterburg—Tilsit—Budwillen—Wilkowischen to Königsberg.

Everywhere the general was greeted warmly and joyfully; everywhere the military associations had also paid tribute to their supreme commander.

In Königsberg, following a speech by General Ludendorff, I addressed a joyfully moved crowd.

In doing so, I was able to express the feelings of respect and solidarity that I, as a Bavarian, felt for the land and people of East Prussia.

I handed over command of the local Gau to Captain Ammon, who had already done good work. 5.

After the Battle of Tannenberg, I issued the following public appeal: Bavarians who adhere to the National Socialist worldview and who declare their loyalty to Hitler, Ludendorff, and Graf have united in the Frontbann. 3 Together with the Front League and the Front Youth affiliated with it, the Ect forms the Front Ring, uniting the German front-line fighters in a single organization.

Germans of all walks of life, German soldiers, German youth—join the ranks of the Front Ring!

Applications, etc.

East Prussia, on the day of the Battle of Tannenberg.

By order of: Röhm, Capt.

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The Front Banner and Front Ring were thus launched; I was confident that a New Front would now emerge within the framework of the People’s Movement in the struggle for Germany’s renewal and strengthening.

Meanwhile, on August 29, in Berlin,

A blinded and deceived Reichstag submitted to “General” Dawes’s plan.

In righteous anger and filled with disgust and shame, General Ludendorff, followed by his loyal national friends, left the High House on Königsplatz, which adjourned on the same day following its capitulation. A black day had once again fallen upon Germany.

A black day, in particular, for the Great National Party, half of which had offered its hand to the enslavement of the fatherland.

Within the political National Socialist and völkisch movement, a slow strengthening began to take hold despite many internal difficulties and resistances.

The Reich leadership of Ludendorff-Graefe-Straßer was not always able to assert itself in large parts of the Reich.

Especially in Bavaria, the resistance did not cease.

Here, too disparate elements had been united into a single faction as elected representatives in the Völkschen Block.

Pöhner went his own way; he was arguably the preeminent mind in Prannerstraße; however, he did not possess the gift of bringing together the diverging elements.

Thus, it was inevitable that opposition to the Völkischer Block would grow ever stronger and eventually find its visible representation in the “Greater German People’s Community” under Hermann Esser and Zulius Streicher.

It openly declared itself against the Völkischer Block.

Hitler remained silent on all of this: he also allowed the opponents who opposed the new leadership to have their way.

In Weimar, the previous N.

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On August 20,

A special session was held.

It did not go well.

General Ludendorff left it, quite rightly, under a cloud.

The factions often clashed fiercely, especially when I was presiding over the meeting.

While Rosenberg, the chief editor of the “Völkischer Beobachter,” and his closest friends opposed a merger with the Völkische Freiheitspartei to form a united National Socialist movement, Straßer, Streicher, and Esser spoke in favor of it on the condition of Hiller’s absolute leadership hegemony.

A few months later, the Großdeutsche Volksgemeinschaft, of which Dinter was a leader, also declared its opposition to the Reich leadership.

Whether this action took place without Hitler’s knowledge and against his will, I do not know.

In any case, I find no sufficient basis for this in the personalities of Dinter, Streicher, and Esser alone. In some völkisch circles and those sympathetic to the Völkisch movement, people have become accustomed to blaming one of these men for everything they dislike about the National Socialist movement.

That is not correct.

Hermann Esser is not only, by virtue of his fine upbringing and education, a gifted and ambitious force from whom much may yet be expected in the future; he is above all a fiery and rousing orator.

Fully devoted to the Führer Hitler, he remained loyal to him even in the most difficult situations.

Some may perhaps have gained the impression now and then that, in the heat of the moment, he gave too free rein to his temperament.

But I cannot see this as a fault on his part: in the political arena, one cannot always play the flute.

Personally, I have often and gladly worked with him and recognized him as a reliable comrade; this did not prevent me from opposing him when I disagreed with his actions.

The manner of the ruthless struggle waged by Julius Streicher may not readily find everyone’s approval.

However, neither friend nor foe—and certainly not the Jew—can or will deny his effectiveness and success.

In other respects as well, many brave and upright nationalistic fighters of the G.

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, including Hitler’s proven comrade-in-arms on the battlefield, steadfast comrade-in-arms, and then-party executive director Max Amann.

Despite this, I could not come to terms with the stance of the Greater German People’s Community.

All these manifestations of political infighting strengthened my resolve to keep the Frontbann entirely outside the factional dispute.

The Frontbann was to stand above the ethnic party factions of the time and thus become an element of unity within the overall ethnic movement.

This, of course, was all the more of a thorn in the side of the career politicians!

Attempts by party strategists to gain influence over the Frontbann were inevitable and even met with success in some places.

Thus, the establishment of the Frontbann Baden, which I had initiated in lengthy discussions in Heidelberg and Ossenburg, was once again shattered by the opposition of these “reformers.”

On September 13,

I accompanied the general to Elberfeld and Münster, where the political and military organization of these districts was to be established.

Captain Pfesser von Salomon was able to present well-drilled assault troops there; delegations had even hurried in from the occupied territory.

I had followed the “provisional order” for the establishment of the Frontbann with the “Frontbann Service Regulations,” in which all orders down to the smallest detail were laid out according to strict military guidelines.

But the structure was laid out therein: 297 The troop organization for the Frontbann is as follows: At the head of the Frontbann stands the commander of the Frontbann as the representative of the leadership.

The group commands are subordinate to the High Command, the provincial commands to the group commands, and the section commands to the provincial commands.

Subordinate to the sector commander are: the assault troop commander and the district commanders, to whom the local commanders are subordinate.

The local commands are organized into groups, platoons, companies, battalions, etc., depending on their strength.

I had appointed the following as group commanders: Northern Group (Berlin): Captain von Heodebreck, Chief of Staff: Lieutenant von Winterfeld; Central Group (Salzburg): Count von Helldorss, Chief of Staff: Lieutenant Baron von Eberstein; Southern Group (Munich): Lieutenant Colonel von Kapss, Chief of Staff: Cavalry Captain Baron von Thüngen; Eastern Group (Salzburg): Captain Brosche, Chief of Staff (Vienna): Reschny.

Engineer Plan≠ chel took over in Vienna for the distinguished Captain Brosche, who had to resign in October 1924 for financial reasons, and led the command with prudence.

In Berlin, following the dissolution of the Reichstag, Major Holtzmann replaced Captain von

Heydebreck, who had to evade the execution of an arrest warrant that still hung over him from his time in the Upper Silesian Freikorps.

As adjutant of the Northern Group, Herbert Suhr, a carefree daredevil and National Socialist, served with zeal and success.

Captain Röhrbein took Holtzmann's place as leader of the Berlin Front Battalion; a man of exceptional energy and dedication, he led the organization in an exemplary manner.

He was a true German officer of the old school, who shared both sorrow and joy with his comrades, who were devoted to him and revered him.

In particular, he knew how—and I held this in high regard—to win a loyal following for the Frontbann from among the working-class youth.

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In the spring of 1927, under the leadership of the energetic Dr.

Göbbels, it is largely thanks to the work of Röhrbein, who, as Front Bannführer, laid the foundation for later developments.

In his fine adjutant Ern ft, he had a most loyal helper.

In Munich, in addition to Captain Seydel and Lieutenant Oßwald, Captain von Krausser, Lieutenant Edmund Heines, and Captain Öfterreicher stood out in particular.

Krausser devoted his entire self to the cause with great selflessness; he proved well-suited to the particularly difficult conditions in Munich.

Öfterreicher had, with his fine company, broken away from the Oberland League and remained loyal to General Ludendorff and me.

Lieutenant Edmund Heines, whom I first got to know back then, is surely one of the most striking fiery spirits in the young Bavarian movement.

Blindly devoted to the leader, a shining example to his men, he embodies the very type of Freikorps officer who has so often saved Germany and alone can raise it up again.

Danger and caution were unknown to the eternally young officer; time and again, when it came to fighting, he stood in the front line.

I will always repay his loyalty with loyalty.

Among my trusted comrades in the Munich Front Association, I would like to highlight, in addition to Major Faber, Captain Weiß, Captain Dreßler, and Dr.

Schramm, I would also like to highlight Captain Starck, who has demonstrated his loyalty to the flag of the R.

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in November 1923 by resigning from the state police.

Thus, the Frontbann had grown in a short time into a formidable organization whose internal strength and external power were constantly increasing.

As its prestige and power grew, so did the number of its opponents.

By mid-September 1924, I realized that a general offensive against the Frontbann was imminent.

On September 16, 1924, I issued another directive from Berlin, which U.

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stated: 1.

Given the current composition of the governments, the National Socialist defense movement must always expect resistance and persecution from the authorities.

It is therefore necessary to organize our work in such a way that it offers the authorities no grounds for intervention or prohibition. “The decrees that are objectionable to the authorities, particularly the police, will therefore be suspended by a special order, etc.

In the special decree issued on September 15,

Since I had already left, I had waived the oath of allegiance to General Ludendorff and the swearing-in ceremony before the flag.

As early as September 17,

the anticipated major offensive against the front line began.

The Bavarian state government opened hostilities by summarily arresting the leaders of the Munich associations.

Virtually all of the documentary material was confiscated by the police.

By publishing excerpts from the papers, particularly private letters that had fallen into its hands, the government believed it could justify its action.

Those arrested were: Lieutenant Karl Oßwald, Captain von Kraus≠fer, First Lieutenant von Prosch, First Lieutenant Brückner, Dr.

Schramm, Captain Weiß, and a few days later Captain Seidel and Major Faber.

I immediately rushed from Berlin to Munich and took every possible step to secure the release of my friends.

In summary, they are set forth in a statement that I released to the public on September 20, 1924. 299 It was directed primarily against the Bavarian Minister of the Interior and the Bavarian People's Party, who saw the time as having come to suppress the growing national defense movement using the state's power structures at the service of his party.

The statement read: A Statement by Captain Röhm.

Captain Röhm, leader of the Frontbann, has entrusted us with the following statement for publication: Due to the extensive arrests of my comrades in the Frontbann, which I organized, and who have stood by my side, a struggle has been forced upon me—one that I will not wage with the sword, but which must and will be waged in another arena. 1.

Regarding the remarks made by the Minister of the Interior for those who are always suspicious and cannot understand official statements and denials, there is only this to say: these will be addressed in the Front Ring's statement of September 18.

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The crux of the matter is, in fact, whether the Frontbann was banned or is banned.

During the preliminary discussions, "reservations" were indeed raised, which essentially referred to the Aug Ludendorss, but there was never any talk of a ban.

Even recently, during my meetings at the State Ministry, such a ban was expressly denied. 2.

The matter has now been handed over to the State Court in Leipzig with a promptness and speed hitherto uncommon in Bavaria, for the protection of the Republic.

The State Court will thus have the opportunity to address, both in this specific case and in general, the question of Bavarian defense associations and their context.

I have no reason to shy away from this; from the very first day, I have acted with full conviction, in the knowledge that I am in the right.

The Bavarian State Prosecutor's Office could have saved itself effort and expense if it had asked me to hand over all the records to it; for Lieutenant Oßwald had already suggested, at the very founding of the Frontbann, that all orders of the Frontbann be forwarded to the State Ministry of the Interior.

My negotiations with the

Minister of the Interior did not, however, follow a course aimed at “promoting” the Frontbann—I was not at all demanding—I merely asked, with the explicit note that I could not expect my friends to work with me if they were exposing themselves to the risk of persecution, to hold me solely responsible and to come after me if anything were not in order; I would be prepared to follow any suggestions or objections from the State Ministry in every respect.

Only then did I ask my friends for their cooperation.

They were and had to be of the absolute conviction that they were acting within legal and permissible bounds, and I constantly reinforced them in this belief. 3.

For this reason, the actions of the Munich authorities against my friends are virtually unprecedented. * In the appeals I have lodged with all relevant authorities over the past two days, I have not been informed of the actual crime for which my comrades were thrown into prison.

I am being sent from one office to another, and now there is no one in Munich who is competent to handle this; I must now turn to Leipzig. “There is a reason for me to proceed,” “they” replied to me.

But I am the sole and only person responsible.

I am the creator and founder of the Frontbann and have issued all orders alone; I am also—as the confiscated files will show—solely liable.

Not Hiller, to whom I could report neither verbally nor in writing, since the founding of the Frontbann took place during a period when he had asked me to refrain from visits, during which I never visited him again.

Not General Ludendorff, to whom I did report from time to time on the founding and progress of the organization, but who had more or less assumed a kind of patronage.

General Ludendorff intervened only once, expressing reservations about certain points in the service regulations, which, in his view, did not comply with legal and police provisions.

After consulting with an expert, I repealed these points in a decree dated September 15, 1924, No. 219 9 8—that is, before the persecution broke out in Munich—from Berlin. 4.

Immediately upon my arrival from Berlin on the morning of September 18

September at noon, in the presence of Rep.

Strasser, I asked the Minister of the Interior not to treat at least my friends as criminals and to release them from custody.

I personally offered every guarantee to this effect and offered myself as a guarantor.

A 8 The Minister of State then promised me that he would take every possible step to release my friends. 3 During my visit on September 19,

September, he informed me that two people had already been released from custody.

Nevertheless, three more of my friends have now been thrown into prison.

N From the foregoing, it is further evident that 285 it was not legal necessities that provided the occasion for this barbaric action, but solely political reasons.

This will also enable the Minister of the Interior to fulfill his promises of September 18.

to ensure—without interfering in the judicial investigation—that these brave German men, whose ardent love of country he too will recognize, are spared a further humiliating term of imprisonment. 4 3 A sense of duty demands that these men be released immediately; I will answer to every court and every authority.

Munich, September 20, 1924.

Nö hm, Captain a.

D.

I now took sole charge of leading the Frontbann to guide it through the storms of persecution.

In a series of decrees, the necessary orders were issued. “The current situation will reveal which men remain loyal to our cause even in a difficult time of persecution.

I order that all the hesitant, the lukewarm, and the cowards who are now giving up be summarily removed from our movement,” I ordered on September 23, 1924.

I had almost no allies in my struggle, not even among the nationalist parties.

A lecture I gave in the presence of His Excellency Tudendorss on October 1

in front of the state parliamentary group of the Nationalist Block in Munich met with neither approval nor support there.

The representatives Dr.

Roth and Count Treuberg, on the other hand, took a sharp stand against the ban on the Front.

In the case of Dr.

Roth, who was not a front-line soldier, a lack of understanding of the ultimate will of the front-line fighters seems to have come to the fore here. 301 The parliamentarians in general viewed the defense movement as troublesome competitors who only caused them unnecessary trouble.

The old adage proved true once again: Whenever a power player forms outside of parliament and gains significance, he is attacked and destroyed by the bigwigs of his own party.

Parliamentarians tolerate no other gods beside themselves.

Thus, the Einwohnerwehr was destroyed with the help of the Bavarian People's Party, and the Orgesch with the help of the German Nationalists.

Whether the Neichsbanner will have a different experience remains to be seen.

Everything that is under parliamentary leadership or influence carries within it the seeds of decay and is destroyed by the parliamentarians themselves.

The nationalist representatives of the sovereign Bavarian people have, in any case, demonstrated in the matter of the front banner that they can confidently join their colleagues from the other parties on this point.

Which, of course, did not prevent them from singing along in booming voices to the song "Hakenkreuz am Stahlhelm."

In my opinion, it could do no harm if the nationalist parliamentarians were to remind themselves time and again that the movement has chosen as its symbol not the top hat, but the steel helmet.

It was not recognized that the Bavarian authorities' action against the Frontbann was only a partial attack against the entire Völkisch movement: nor was it recognized that it was merely a pretext to delay the release of the prisoners in Landsberg.

The release of Hitler, Kriebel, and Dr.

Weber was, at the time, on April 1

had been set by the People's Judges for October 1.

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Only after this promise, and following fierce resistance, could the German- and law-minded members of the People's Court be persuaded of the necessity of a guilty verdict.

Now they, and the many gullible people who had placed their trust in promises, saw themselves betrayed once again.

To this end, just before October 1,

the action against the Frontbann, which lacked any legal basis, was launched.

This connection was so obvious that it required no special insight to recognize it.

Only the Völkische Volksboten in the state parliament refused to see it, because it did not suit their agenda.

Unfortunately, Adolf Hitler, too, apparently did not want to acknowledge this clear state of affairs—likely due to his isolation behind fortress walls.

On the other hand, as an opponent of the ruling Bavarian People's Party, I must admit that, with ruthlessness and determination—indeed, by bending the law—it has dealt a severe blow to its enemy, the Völkisch movement, through its actions.

This attack shook even me, not because it took place—I was determined to take up the fight and see it through to the end—but because I had to learn that the People's Movement as a whole proved unequal to this struggle.

The movement should have stood as one man before the beleaguered front lines.

Instead, it attacked him and accused him of being to blame for all the misfortune.

It could not have done a greater favor to the mocking opponents; for that was exactly what the others wanted.

The typical German trait of impartiality and objectivity toward the enemy seems to be too finely refined in the Völkisch movement.

Hitler, Kriebel, and Weber could not or would not recognize what was at stake.

They felt their impending freedom threatened and sought the blame not in the enemy, but in the friends who fought for them.

The völkisch parties in the Reich behaved no differently than the Völkisch Block or the Greater German People's Community.

The latter even publicly opposed the Frontbann.

It no longer needs to be concealed that it was none other than a leader of the Greater German People's Community who, in July 1924, derailed a campaign—which had every prospect of success—to secure the release of the Landsberg fortress prisoners by delivering an ill-fated speech in Nuremberg.

The late Police President Pöhner could probably provide quite significant insights into this matter!

Only General Ludendorff saw the full picture.

The upright men of the Frontbann, who had been thrown into prison through no fault of their own, stood by my side unwaveringly.

Not a word of complaint or reproach came from them.

They knew why they were being persecuted.

And they alone made personal sacrifices.

Thus, the burden of the struggle rested solely on my shoulders.

The Frontbann stood united and undaunted behind me.

That gave me the strength to resolve to carry the struggle through to the very end.

The bitterness over the misunderstanding and the unwillingness of the nationalist parties to accept facts had already led me to resolve, even back then, to step down from leadership after the battle was over and to withdraw from active political life until further notice.

I can endure anything, except stupidity; I do not like to fight with fools.

But stupidity in politics is not a curable illness; it is an absolute crime.

To reassure everyone, especially the fools, I issued this statement on October 15, 1924: “L.

At the end of May or beginning of June 1924, during a visit to Landsberg, I spoke to Messrs. Hitler, Kriebel, and Weber of my intention to found a completely new organization. 2.

During the conversation, the gentlemen expressed their views and, as I recall, essentially agreed on the following: 303 That the associations which were not banned at all in the individual states should be preserved in their old form, remain as they are, and that efforts should be made to have the associations which were banned in the various states reinstated.

N l 3.

The founding of the Frontbund did not take place until August, without any internal connection to that discussion and without the agreement of the three special representatives; the appeal was drafted and issued by me without my having spoken with Messrs. Hitler, Kriebel, and Weber or obtained their consent.

To this statement, which was also intended for the public, I added that I had not been in Landsberg since the day Hitler had asked me to refrain from visiting, particularly because a letter I had sent to Hitler asking whether a visit from me was desired had remained unanswered. 5 As my fundamental statement, I reiterate that, in the interest of the defense movement, I felt obliged to act independently, even without Hitler, Krledel, or Weber, since they were not in a position in Landsberg to gain a clear understanding of the actual conditions in the Reich.

Signed

Röhm.” General Ludendorff concurred with this statement.

I reject a statement drafted by Attorney Roder on Hitler’s behalf that went further.

To District Attorney Dr. Kellerer, before whom I appeared as a witness on October 17,

for questioning as a witness, I handed over the statement regarding the ban on the front lines, attached in Appendix Z.

A memorandum by General Ludendorff took the same line.

The proceedings for secret society activity against Oßwald and seven comrades were extended by the

State Court for the Protection of the Republic at the end of October to include General Ludendorss and myself as well, “since, in collaboration with Ludendorff as the spiritual leader, I had been active in the establishment and expansion of the Frontbann and as its commander, and there is reason to believe that the Frontbann pursues the aim of undermining the republican form of government of the Reich and the states, as established by the Constitution.”

It was not until nearly four weeks after the initial arrest that the actual investigation proceedings began.

Prior to that, the files were allegedly never accessible, as they were always in transit.

Only after repeated appeals was I able to secure the release of the detainees.

The blame, however, did not lie with District Court Judge Kellerer, to whom the conduct of the investigation was only entrusted after the aforementioned four weeks, and who then, it must be acknowledged, did everything in his power to expedite the proceedings.

It should be noted here that, on September 26, 1925, the State Court of Justice, in the interest of protecting the public, dismissed the case against Oswald and nine comrades.

The Bavarian People’s Party, however, had achieved its goal of delaying Hitler’s release from custody. 304 Once again, during that period of the Frontbann’s struggle for self-preservation against state arbitrariness, an attack was launched from within the ranks of the party.

Major von Waldow, the exemplary leader from Hanover, had assembled the Lower Saxony Frontbann on September 28, 1924, for a military review before General Ludendorff near Walsrode.

Alongside the sturdy ranks of the robust Lower Saxons, the Bremen Reich War Flag, led by National Socialist First Lieutenant Lindenberg, had also taken up position.

The well-disciplined, sharp-looking unit—about 150 men—made an excellent impression.

Major Henning, a German Nationalist representative whose constituency included Bremen, was politically at odds with the National Socialists there, including Lindenberg.

Despite my objections, he succeeded in persuading General Ludendorff to ensure that the R.

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was not allowed to participate in the march past before their supreme leader.

The measure was devastating for the unit, which had rushed in specially from Bremen; it affected me particularly because the unit had a special connection to me through the name it bore with my consent.

I could not abandon the troops and their proven leader and stood up for them.

The result was a serious rift between General Ludendorff and me.

I had always been opposed to Major Henning's actions; from the day he had shattered the bond of trust between General Ludendorff and me and brought discord into my organization, I had been hostile toward him.

The wounds of such a day do not heal.

I can get over an insult directed at me personally much more easily than one inflicted upon my subordinates.

Here I will fight until I am forced to surrender my position.

Once again on October 19.

On German Day in Plauen, I was permitted to present the Saxon Front Banner to the esteemed commander under the leadership of the most proven Reinartz.

In the days that followed, I briefed General Ludendorff on everything that was on my mind.

In addition to the events in Walsrode, the subject of my discussions was particularly the situation in Baden, where the measures I had taken were thwarted by party-political maneuvers, the party-nationalist conditions in Bavaria, and especially the interference of some leaders of the Freedom Party in the affairs of the Frontbann.

I repeatedly offered my resignation to the general.

In a spirit of fine camaraderie, Reichstag deputy Feder sought to reconcile the differences.

The entire national movement was in a severe crisis, fragmented, divided, group against group, the defense movement against the party, leader against leader—a picture of turmoil and disunity. 20 Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 305 This state of weakness within the movement was not unknown to the united opponents.

G 5 During this period of the most intense internal struggles, the adoption of the Dawes Pact was under debate in the Reichstag.

Only the Völkische and the Communists were resolute opponents of the adoption.

These party groups were at that moment so weakened by internal strife that their effectiveness, should the people now be called to the polls, was considerably impaired.

This was the moment to act.

The German Reichstag was dissolved; new elections were scheduled for December 7.

.) From a "Warning" that I presented to the General in November—out of deep concern for the future of the movement, in the struggle for the recognition of the defense movement, within the framework of the Nationalist United Front—I include the following sentences from Section IV (The Elections and Parliament): "Thus, the picture of the movement's current situation is a mirror image of Germany: on the outside, surrounded and besieged by enemies who, with cold calculation and the full mobilization

of seemingly inexhaustible resources, strive for the clear goal of annihilation; on the inside, divided, fragmented, without a universally recognized leadership, full of bitterness, mistrust, and discontent within its own ranks; as a whole, oppressed and ostracized by the state and society, devoid of all material resources. 2 The Jews have chosen this moment of weakness to call upon the people to vote in elections to establish a new Reichstag that will serve as a willing tool in the enslavement of the German people.

Internal strife and external oppression will weaken the movement so much—that is Judas's calculation—that the fighting group in the Reichstag, the conscience of the German people, will return only in greatly diminished form.

Quite apart from that, it was a matter of life and death for those in power—the true implementation politicians—to trigger theand to hold new elections at a point in time when the effects of the Dawes Laws had not yet become palpably apparent, when a tormented people still clings desperately to those promises and turns a deaf ear to the inconvenient warners.

From Section V (Structure of the Movement), I draw the following conclusions: 'If this reorganisation within the People's Movement is to be a lasting one, then the mutual tendencies must be eliminated.

Flow.

I envision the structure of the movement as follows: 1.

Political movement. 2.

Defense movement. 3.

Factions.

I The political and defense movements are entirely independent of one another.

Both the political movement and the defense movement send their representatives to the factions.

As a leader of the defense movement, I demand that the defense associations be granted a corresponding share of the faction seats and that they not be hindered in their special work there.

As long as I hold this position—I did not seek it—I must demand to be heard and that my proposals be examined and taken into consideration.

Likewise, I will vigorously defend the defense movement against any attempt to sideline it and stand up for all my fellow leaders.

I stand, and with this I come to a close, by the position: 306 The National Socialist movement is a movement of struggle.

Germany's freedom—both at home and abroad—cannot be talked into existence or negotiated; it must be fought for.

For a militant movement, therefore, the existence of a strong defense movement is a prerequisite; its

promotion and strengthening are among the movement's primary tasks. We must therefore win over and retain fighters.

The men from whom we will one day demand that they risk life and limb must already now have the certainty that their elected representatives are granted a corresponding influence within the government.

The betrayal and deception of the frontline soldiers of the World War—whose cause we have, after all, made our own—are too clearly before our eyes for any individual fighter today to step forward joyfully and willingly unless he can be assured that the sacrifices demanded of him are matched by guarantees that safeguard and represent his interests under all circumstances.

If these conditions are met, then the words will not be mere symbols, but will take shape: "Through struggle to victory." My warning went unheeded.

The personal steps I took to secure seats and voting rights for the leaders of the defense movement in the national assembly also proved fruitless. "Parliamentary high-handedness has triumphed across the board; the interests of the defense movement have been completely abandoned," I wrote to His Excellency.

The appointment of First Lieutenant Kriebel, Count von Helldorss, Aletter, Roßbach, and Göring, which I had demanded, was rejected; Heydebreck was placed on a position on the Reich list that precluded re-election.

Thus, the proven National Socialist leaders Göring and Roßbach were denied a return from exile to their homeland; Heydebreck had to leave Berlin in haste immediately after the last session of the dissolved Reichstag to seek temporary safety.

A few weeks later, the Republic's henchmen imprisoned him in Moabit.

I, too, faced arrest due to the Frontbann affair and had to place command in the hands of Count von Helldorss for a time.

For the preparations for the election itself, following an instruction from Ludendorff, I had ordered the Frontbann members to exercise the strictest restraint.

The election itself was, as I predicted, a failure for the Völkisch Movement.

I, too, failed to be re-elected.

I had been placed so far down on the Reich list that it cut me off.

In the meantime, through discussions with the leaders of the groups in Berlin, Halle, Munich, and Vienna, I had established a unified course of action for the Frontbann.

It essentially stated: General Ludendorff as patron, Adolf Hitler as leader of the political movement. = 307 This objective corresponded to the prevailing attitude and the will of the overwhelming majority of the military movement at the time.

General Ludendorff did not approve of it.

Adolf Hitler, to whom I reported shortly after his release from Landsberg, did not want to make a clear and swift decision.

I therefore asked Adolf Hitler on January 14,

January 1925, I asked Adolf Hitler to relieve me of the leadership of the Frontbann; a few days later, I informed the General of my intention.

A decision was postponed; for the time being, I was to retain leadership.

The situation became unbearable for me.

On the one hand, as the leader, I had to chart a clear and unambiguous course for the Frontbann; on the other hand, Hitler took no position regarding General Ludendorff and refrained from commenting.

On February 12, 1925, General Ludendorff resigned from the Reich leadership of the Völkische Bewegung; Graefe and Strajser also stepped down from the Reich leadership along with him.

On February 13, 1925, I issued the following order: To the groups! “1.

General Ludendorff has today resigned from his position as Reich Leader and, at the same time, informed me in a personal letter that there will be no change in his relationship with the military units.

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His Excellency’s position regarding the Frontbann therefore remains the same as before.

We may continue to honor General Ludendorff as our patron. 3.

General Ludendorss further expressed the wish that the Frontbann keep itself free from disputes, divisions, etc.

It will be the honor and duty of the Frontbann to fulfill the requests of the honored members.

It will be the honor and duty of the Frontbann to comply with the wishes of the esteemed members.

True to its previous stance, the Frontbann will continue to refrain from party-political activity and thus best serve its mission as the core of the National Socialist movement as a whole. 1 of 5.

All organizational matters will be settled at the Frontbann leadership meeting, which will take place in March in the Naumburg area.” A clarification was now in order.

From February 28

to March 2, 1925, the Frontbann leadership meeting took place at the castle of General Helldorff in Wohlmirstedt.

General Ludendorff had expressed his gratitude for the invitation; the attempt

to bring Adolf Hitler from Bayreuth by car had failed, as Hitler could not be located.

Count von Helldorss, with the Countess at his side, had done everything

to prepare the conference in the best possible way. 5 In addition to 42 Frontbann leaders, the hospitable house provided lodging and meals for another 250 Frontbann members during those days.

High in the wind, the swastika flag fluttered on the gable of the castle alongside the old Prussian colors.

A torchlight procession of the 250 Frontbann troops and a tattoo, led by Lieutenant Baron von Eberstein, opened the conference on the evening of February 28.

February. 308 On the 1st

and 2

March, I held the meetings, in which leaders from all districts of the Reich participated, representing 30,000 comrades.

The political outcome was a resolution pledging allegiance to Adolf Hitler as the leader and champion of the National Socialist movement and to General Ludendorff as its patron.

This direction did not correspond to General Ludendorff’s wishes; nor was it sufficient for Hitler.

He had meanwhile turned to the reestablishment of the N.

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General Ludendorff

General Ludendorff then released the members of the Frontbann from any obligation to him.

Hitler asked me to take over the leadership of the National Socialist s.

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However, I was unable to comply with this request.

I was heartened by an event that was bound to strengthen Hitler’s ties with General Ludendorff.

After Ebert’s death, the German people had to elect a new President of the Reich.

Hitler hurried to Berlin, where I happened to be staying at the time.

A brief meeting, to which leaders of the National Socialist movement were invited, resulted in the unanimous conclusion that the best man Germany had should hold this post.

Hitler undertook to place himself at the head of the German opposition and to propose General Ludendorff to the people as President of the Reich.

General Ludendorff made himself available for election at Hitler’s request.

He was aware from the outset that his candidacy would not succeed; all the more did I admire the selflessness and greatness of his decision.

With enthusiasm, I undertook the task assigned to me by Hitler of drafting the election appeals for Ludendorff together with him.

The German National Freedom Party, which, following the reestablishment of the N.

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, did not approve of Tudendor’s exhibition.

It proceeded from the consideration—which was not in itself disputed—of protecting the general from the certain rejection of his election.

We, on the other hand, took the position shared by General Ludendorff that the day of the election should be a day of trial for the German people. “We want to know by March 29,”

March,” I explained in one of the election appeals, “so that history may one day judge how many people in Germany, six years after the glorious November Republic, have had enough of the constant deception of the people, the hypnotic compliance, the parliamentary and democratic fraud—in short, the politics of half-measures, stupidity, and cowardice.” Another appeal stated: “German!

You must say on March 29,

March 1925, say whether you liked the Ebert Republic or not.

You must decide whether things should remain as they have been during the six years of Ebert’s regency, since the glorious November of 1918, or not. 309 ER 4 whether you agree that the state commands and the German obeys, or not.

Whether you accept that your savings are lost for good, or whether you still value the prospect that one day the fruits of your diligence, labor, and years of thrift will be honestly returned to you.

You must choose between “a cash republic or a people’s state, a slave colony, or a constitutional state—Judah or Germany.” But to the soldiers we cried out: “Soldiers of the Old Army!

Members of the reserve!

Comrades of the units!

You have fought for 4 years on the front. ‘The gratitude of the Fatherland is assured!’ you were told.

Comrades, you have learned it the hard way!

You have fought in Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, and on the Rhine, in Central Germany, etc.

“For the Fatherland,” you thought. But the Fatherland went to ruin, and you only secured the wavering thrones of Ebert, Scheidemann, and their comrades with your blood.

But the Fatherland’s thanks, however, was to cast you out, either by putting you out on the street or, for particularly proven services, locking you up behind bars.

You fought against Poland in Upper Silesia to preserve German land—or so you believed!

But a certain government saw it differently and, despite your blood, surrendered the land.

You tried to protect the Ruhr region with your lives. — And those who first called upon you sacrificed the fruit of your struggle in the most shameful surrender of all time.

Officers and soldiers of the Old Army, the Freikorps, and the Patriotic Associations!

Whenever you were needed, you were called upon; as soon as you were no longer needed, you were dismissed!

Today you are needed once more!

Give them your vote now, so that tomorrow you may receive the final blow.

Elect a civilian strategist, but once again stand up for the brave “fighters” of the homeland, and you will receive your thanks, as you always have. For 60 years you have been treated shamelessly!

Do you want to serve forever only as slaves?

Every one of you who hates this regiment of scoundrels, cast your vote on March 20

March to Maune, in whose name the sharpest protest against the ingratitude toward the former fighter will be expressed forever: To General Quartermaster Ludendorss!” I have added another appeal at the end of the closing remarks.

The result of the election was a measure of the people's lack of will to place their fate in the hands of a strong personality. 310 Continuing to flounder in the democratic swamp is more comfortable for the majority of the people; the philistine fears that his beloved peace might be disturbed.

The orgy of mediocrity that has been raging in Germany since 1918 would, of course, have met an inglorious end under a Tudendorss regime.

How had we cried out to the "German citizens" before the election? "Hul! Peace and order are in danger if you elect Ludendorff!

Indeed, the peace and order of the November Republic are gone!

The peace with which the Galician and other rabble and profiteers have been plundering Germany for six years, with which the profiteers of war, revolution, inflation, and instability—with the support of red and black party ministers and government bigwigs—have been robbing and selling out the German people!

That peace is over. The "order" in which decent people are harassed, persecuted, and thrown into prison, while the scum roam free and paid traitors can sell out our fatherland with impunity—that "order" is coming to an end!" But a large part of the weary people had grown all too accustomed to this "peace and order."

What good was the slogan: "Freedom or oppression?"

The oppression was barely noticeable, gentle, slow, and gradual.

But freedom had to be won through struggle!

The "level-headed" expressed the opinion that Ludendorff, whose military fame was already controversial, understood absolutely nothing about politics.

I don't know, whenever I hear this assertion—voiced with the pride of a schoolboy and repeated ad nauseam—I wonder what I should be more surprised by: the stupidity or the audacity of this value judgment.

Most people have not even bothered to verify what the general has accomplished as a statesman and organizer in the occupied East and in the Supreme Army Command, in addition to his military exploits, which are admired and acknowledged by the enemy.

The struggle that this true and selfless reformer is waging today for his people against a world of enemies will not be understood and utilized in all its grandeur by this age of zeros, but only by a later generation.

History will record the image of the commander and statesman of the World War as that of the man whom Germany's enemies hated and feared most bitterly, whom the pitiful foamers and whiners of a diminished generation sought in vain to defile.

Whenever the "politicians of reason" parrot their little saying about the "politically unwise" general, I

am always reminded of the character of the Bavarian deputy Filser, created by the unforgettable poet Ludwig Thoma. 311 When Councilor Nudelmeier and the untrained reservist Huber pass judgment on the politician and commander Ludendorff, it is exactly the same as when the unrefined, uneducated Filser subjects Bismarck's politics to critical scrutiny.

For the Lopsch bourgeois, one thing is still characteristic and became strikingly evident again in the second round of the presidential election: Ludendorff was "unacceptable" as a candidate; Hindenburg's nomination was greeted with enthusiasm.

Every surplus private at the front and every clerk in a local office knew and knows that within the Supreme Army Command, Hindenburg was more of a figurehead, while the leadership of the armies and the massive organizational work rested primarily on Ludendorff's shoulders.

It is good that this observation has recently been confirmed by an authoritative voice, namely that of the Austrian Chief of the General Staff, Field Marshal Conrad von Hötzendorf, because for the Germans, the judgment of a non-German is always the more decisive one.

Even the "Nationalists" did not want a man of ruthless determination and iron will; they knew that a Ludendorff-led regiment would demand not words but deeds, even from the Nationalists.

And so they preferred the seasoned field marshal to the youthful general.

Even today, their expectations have not been disappointed.

March 29, 1925, showed that the time for rising from disgrace and hardship was still far from coming and lay in the distant, as yet unrecognizable future.

On March 22,

I accompanied Hitler to Weimar, where he

Dinter with the leadership of the Gau.

I held and still hold Dr.

Dinter.

However, his appointment met with widespread opposition.

In particular, the Frontbann emphatically voiced serious reservations.

Hitler's demand for unconditional recognition of his orders was, however, unjustified, as he had not yet recognized the Frontbann as the National Socialist military movement and thus placed it under his command.

I could therefore not lend my support to disciplinary measures against the leaders, particularly the distinguished Captain Thoene, which Hitler opposed.

The relationship between Hitler and me suffered significantly as a result.

At the turn of March and the beginning of April, I spoke at several locations, in Leipzig, Nuremberg, and finally at the Roßbach Division in Munich.

On April 11

April, Police President Pöhner fell victim to a car accident, the circumstances of which have not yet been fully clarified.

The national movement as a whole thus lost one of its most capable champions, who is irreplaceable.

The loss is particularly tragic for the Royal House and the Monarchist Movement, of which Pöhner was the most prominent leader. 312 History will one day recognize this extraordinary figure as having rendered a special service to the renewal of Germany, once this has become a reality.

The gap that his death has torn in the ranks of the patriots cannot be closed.

It must be described as a disgrace and a shame, to be passed down to posterity, that the Munich City Council refused to grant permission for Pöhner's gravestone in the Waldfriedhof to bear the inscription: "To the exemplar of the most faithful fulfillment of duty, the grateful fatherland." In response to this act of folly, his wife had the deceased transferred in November 1927 to Hoheneck Castle in Franconia, the estate of the German publisher Lehmann.

On April 26,

April, the German people elected Field Marshal von Hindenburg as President of the Reich.

The incident in Weimar prompted me to bring about a fundamental clarification of my relationship with Hitler.

I wanted to tell my friend Hitler, in all honesty, everything that I did not like.

I know that many people cannot stand those who admonish and warn; I have always taken the opposite stance.

As long as I held positions of responsibility, I always had a loyal friend by my side, to whom I assigned, above all, the task of presenting to me, without mincing words, any objections that might be raised against measures I had taken.

I consider the "spirit of negation" to be an indispensable companion on all paths of human striving and action.

I was bound to Hitler by sincere friendship; precisely because I feared that flatterers were crowding around him, who worshipped him unconditionally and dared not utter a word of dissent, I felt obliged to speak frankly to my friend as a loyal comrade.

On April 16, 1925, I handed him a detailed memorandum at his apartment in Munich, which I discussed with him.

Regarding the military organization, I stated: “The decision on the structure of the S.

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and the adoption of the Frontbann must now be made.

Despite immense difficulties and the arrest of the Munich leaders, the Frontbann has established itself and prevailed.

In almost all districts of Germany and German Austria, there are today more or less strong and established Frontbann associations, currently numbering around 30,000 men in total.

During the crisis in the political movement, it was exclusively and solely the Frontbann units in certain parts of the Reich that were the bearers of the National Socialist idea and, transcending all personal differences, formed the backbone of the movement.

If the confidence of the subordinate leaders is not to be shattered, a decision must be made now; I must now be put back in a position to issue clear and decisive orders.

I will no longer go along with further vacillation.

Ultimately, the whole issue is purely a matter of trust.

The question is whether you have confidence that I am leading the organization in accordance with your wishes or not.

If this trust does not exist, then my immediate resignation goes without saying. 5 1 I believe that I have made sacrifices quite different from those of many who now cannot bring themselves to speak at all.

I now ask that the decision be made clearly, unambiguously, and immediately.” From the draft guidelines for the reorganization of the Frontbann and the S.

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I would like to highlight the following points: 4.

I alone assume responsibility for the Frontbann; orders are issued only by me and the subordinate leaders appointed by me. 7.

The unifying bond that binds all units of the Frontbann together is: > 5 K 5 The will to remain capable of defense and to preserve the traditions of the old army; FE b) the idea that Adolf Hitler gave to the German people in National Socialism. 5 A In the units, the tradition and legacy of their leaders. 9.

As a defense organization, the Frontbann constitutes an independent unit within the movement.

While it clearly and unambiguously professes its commitment to Adolf Hitler’s political ideology, it equally and categorically refuses to be drawn into personal or current political disputes.

Party politics is not tolerated in the Frontbann, nor in the S.

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R 10.

C) I hereby strictly forbid any interference by the S.

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in party affairs; I likewise strictly forbid the S.

A.≠from party political leaders. 5 Regarding the deployment of the S.

A., the Front, etc.

Special orders will be issued at the request of the political parties. 15.

All units in the Front must be organized in accordance with the requirements of the Association Act; in particular, the possession of weapons is strictly prohibited.

U i 20.

The Frontbann will not evade the requirements of state authorities and the Imperial Army, which aim to protect the fatherland.

All such requirements must be reported to the Okdo.

It reserves the right to make the final decision in all cases.

The decision is reserved in all cases.

The discussion with Hitler was unsatisfactory.

Hitler did not view my actions as a friendly service, but rather as a deliberate belittling of his work.

That was, of course, quite far from my mind.

He rejected my proposals for the reestablishment of the Frontbann.

He demanded exclusive subordination and incorporation under the name of the N.

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The conclusion for me was obvious.

The following day, I gave Hitler the assignment to lead the S.

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and asked him to agree to my resignation as commander of the Frontbann.

That was on April 17, 1925.

I received no reply.

On April 30,

I wrote to Hitler: “Since I have not received a reply to my letter in which I requested the assignment to lead the S.

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back into your hands, I believe I can safely assume your consent when I submit the enclosed statement from the National Socialist press for publication. 314 A justification for my action is included in a second statement.

I take this opportunity, in remembrance of the good and difficult times we have spent together, to thank you heartily for your comradeship and to ask you not to withdraw your personal friendship from me.

Etc.” I sent the following letter to General Ludendorff: “I respectfully inform Your Excellency that I have decided to withdraw from all political associations and organizations and to resign from the leadership of the Frontbann.

I have set forth the reasons in the attached statement.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Your Excellency for the many beautiful and uplifting hours I was able to spend in Your Excellency’s company.

"Asw." I issued the following order to the group commands: 1.

As of today, I am stepping down from the command of the Front Battalion and placing it in the hands of the proven commander of the Central Group, Count Helldorss. 2.

I have set forth the reasons in the attached statement.

Since my views on the work and objectives of the Frontbann find favor neither with His Excellency General Ludendorss nor with Adolf 1, my resignation is a matter of course and a necessity of the hour. 3.

I hope that the Frontbann, under the leadership of Count Helldorss, will overcome the difficulties that opposed my leadership, and I ask all leaders to place their full trust in the new commander and to give him their unreserved support. 4.

I thank all comrades, leaders, and men alike, from the bottom of my heart for their loyal service and comradeship, and express my fullest appreciation to all for the successes achieved." On May 1, I published the following statement in the National Socialist press ("Völkischer Beobachter," "Völkischer Kurier," "Deutsche Wochenschau"):

May: "Statement: All inquiries regarding S.

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Find künf≠ tig, as long as no new directive is issued by Adolf Hitler, to the offices of the N.

S.

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Munich, to direct all inquiries regarding the Frontbann to Count Helldorss, Wohlmirstedt.

As of today, I am handing over the management of the Frontbanner and the S.

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At the same time, I am resigning from all political associations and organizations in order to secure full

freedom of action for the future.” In the statement not intended for the press, which I attached to my letter, I concluded: “In addition to economic considerations that compel me to secure a livelihood, political reasons are decisive for my decision, the implementation of which I have postponed with regret from the movement of last November until today.

Since my return from the front, I have sought to fulfill my duty on the very front lines in the struggle for the recovery and restoration of the Fatherland, and I believe I have remained true to my principles to this day.

I have therefore, without regard for my profession or livelihood, of my own free will and out of my deepest conviction, placed myself at the side and disposal of Adolf Hitler, as the most relentless opponent of the November system and the determined leader of the German will for freedom.

I have set myself the special task of uniting German front-line soldiers and German youth into a defensive organization, which on the one hand aimed at training and preserving the will to defend the nation, but on the other hand was sustained and united by a common political idea—the nationalist spirit of freedom and the spirit of the front.

This was to be the distinguishing feature of the Frontbann from other national organizations: that, in addition to the spirit of defense, a clear political ideology—the worldview of National Socialism—would bind its adherents together.

The path I have taken and was determined to take to achieve this goal has not found the support of His Excellency General Ludendorff nor the approval of Adolf Hitler.

I do not intend to lead an association committed to National Socialism without the support of these men, or even against their will.

I have therefore offered Adolf Hitler the leadership of the S.

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Back≠ and at the same time resign from the leadership of the Frontbann.

Furthermore, my resignation from all political organizations and associations is intended to free me from conflicts of conviction and conscience and to secure for myself full freedom of action in the future.

I am stepping down after careful consideration and of my own volition.

“Asw.” Thus, on May 1,

May 1925 from a field of work to which I had devoted several years of my life exclusively.

Numerous were the letters and expressions of loyalty that I received from all the comrades who had fought side by side with me, and which were a source of sincere joy and satisfaction to me.

First Lieutenant Brückner followed my lead.

General Ludendorff wrote back to me immediately: “Dear Röhm!

Thank you for your message and the words that accompany it.

As far as I can see, you have made the right decision.

It was not easy.

You have served the Fatherland with the best of intentions, and you will serve it again.

Then, hopefully, our paths will be the same in every respect.” Adolf Hitler refrained from commenting.

The story of the high treason thus came to an end on May 1,

1925. 316 In the “Völkischer Kurier,” Captain Weiß dedicated these words of honor to me, which I wish to place at the end of my reflection: On the resignation of Captain Röhm.

On May 1,

May that Captain Röhm had resigned from the leadership of the Frontbann.

First Lieutenant Brückner joined Captain Röhm’s initiative; prior to November 9,

November, as commander of the Munich Regiment of the National Socialist Reserve,

Alongside Captain Göring, he was able to embody the National Socialist honor movement in 1935.

With Röhm and Brückner, two prominent figures are leaving political life.

Above all, without the former, Captain Röhm, not only the Völkisch movement but the entire national movement in Bavaria after the November Revolution is inconceivable.

What is characteristic of the young national movement is that its activity did not so much take place in the foreground of political gatherings, but rather through practical and successful organizational work.

But the merits that Captain Röhm earned, especially in the first years after the collapse, for the unification of all nationalist forces in the country and for the purposeful organization of the counterrevolutionary, nationalist movement, have not yet reached the point where they can be discussed in detail.

But when the history of this era is written, the name Röhm will have to be mentioned in the very first place.

In the patriotic movement of Bavaria, Captain Röhm was one of the most active forces, one of those who, as politically uncomplicated individuals with a daring spirit, sought to achieve their goal—the liberation of the fatherland from all internal and external enemies—by the most direct means.

Wherever Captain Röhm appeared in the national and völkisch movement, he brought “life to the party,” but above all, practical work was accomplished.

With a keen eye for the activist spirit of our young generation, he soon recognized that, following the dissolution of the Home Guard, the entire national movement was in danger of sinking into an anachronistic and fruitless pub-table enthusiasm.

He saw his task as ensuring that his organizations, which were determined not to rest on their laurels after defending the most critical “achievements” of the revolution, would instead put their ideals into action and channel them toward the strongest propagandist of action, Adolf Hitler, the man who was still best suited to rally the young German freedom fighters around him as a leader.

Thus Captain Röhm became the actual founder of the German Combat League and the soul of this creation, which, with the two men

And with Hitler at the helm, would gain prestige far beyond the borders of Bavaria.

When Captain Röhm today steps down from the leadership of the Frontbund, no one regrets his departure more than the circle of old friends who have shared with him and at his side the sorrows and joys of the national struggles of recent years.

With him, another of those who, in the truest sense of the word, are upright fighters is leaving a movement that...

began; for those remaining, it is beginning to feel lonely.

Scheubner-Nichter fell under the bullets of the November betrayal; Beupmann and Captain von Müller are currently abroad; Lieutenant Colonel Kriebel, together with his former colleagues, has completely withdrawn from political life since his release from prison 15 months ago.

And now Öhm and Brückner follow.

We do, however, fully appreciate the reasons that led Captain Röhm in particular to his decision; a decision that is understandable in light of the latest developments.

Nevertheless, we remain hopeful that the time will come again when Captain Röhm will once more render his valuable services to the fatherland and the People’s Freedom Movement. 317 Pause in the Struggle Many moons have passed over the land.

The petty bourgeoisie celebrates fantastic orgies in a frenzy of folly.

The “national philistine” competes with the professional philistines of German and Dutch origin for the prize of characterlessness, cowardice, and folly.

Even broad circles of the old Ossicierlorp cannot escape the unnerving poison of the pacifist-democratic stagnant air.

One must step aside to gain some distance and catch one’s breath if one wishes to recognize the extent to which a heroic people can descend into sensory confusion and perversion of values in barely ten years of democratic glory.

What was once considered cowardly and base is now the highest state wisdom; what was once heroic and brave is now regarded as recklessness, indeed as a crime and high treason.

It is not a slip-up, but a sign of the most pitiful spirit of a characterless age when a German-language newspaper (“Münchener Post” of April 13, 1928, No. 86) dares to reproach General von Lettow-Vorbeck, the heroic defender of German East Africa, for having continued to fight until the water ran dry instead of surrendering.

A remark by the Jew Toller, which the “Berliner Tageblatt” has adopted as its own, comes close to a subtle acknowledgment: “The ideal of the hero is the most foolish of all ideals.” The men who, with their bodies torn to shreds, protected their people and fatherland as heroes, are to be sent to the scaffold; the capitulators of November 1918 reign.

There can never be a pact, a reconciliation with this system.

The watchword is victory or ruin.

Although I have not been active in constitutional politics since November 1923, I have nevertheless remained a nationalist.

My views have not changed.

Just as I did before the People’s Court, I do not regret what I strove for and did.

And I am less inclined to a cowardly compromise than ever.

Let them all bow down; I will not yield.

I am not currently on the political front lines.

Not that I have become unfaithful to my revolutionary convictions: 318 Struggle, resistance, setbacks, and disappointment cannot divert the soldier from the goal once chosen.

My heart still belongs to the forward-charging, revolutionary, all-out struggle.

If Young Germany needs fighters, I will be there again.

My position today is still the same, as unyielding as before.

I cannot imagine that three things cannot be reconciled: my loyalty to the hereditary princes of the House of Wittelsbach and heirs to the Bavarian crown; my reverence for the Quartermaster General of the World War, who today embodies the admonishing conscience of the German people; my solidarity with the herald and standard-bearer of the political struggle, Adolf Hitler.

I envision a unified order of nationalist fighters, a united front into which smaller groups must integrate.

Success cannot elude this unified front.

The fact that the assault of November 9, 1923, was unsuccessful does not speak against Hitler, nor against Ludendorff, nor against the Nationalist or National Socialist movement.

The enterprise did not prevail, but it was an act.

And that is what matters.

The Küstrin operation was also doomed to failure; this in no way diminishes the respect for the resolute man who dared to undertake it, Major Buchrucker.

When a manly act fails, the prudent philistine calls it a “putsch.”

Napoleon staged two failed “coups” and ultimately prevailed.

What is significant to me is the soldierly element in a movement.

I will gladly join it if it grants the soldier the privileges he is entitled to claim.

For the Third Reich, which strives for German prestige, strength, and honor, it is essential that the fighter who is ready to risk and give his life has the decisive voice.

To avoid any misunderstanding: not just a voice, but the decisive one.

In short, I demand the primacy of the soldier over the politician.

In particular, I demand this within the narrower framework of the Nationalist Movement.

In a power state, in a movement that strives for power, the soldier must occupy the foremost position.

I thank Hitler for repeatedly offering me the leadership of his protection units.

His trust has honored and delighted me.

At the time, however, I could not make up my mind.

I also had to decline an honorable proposal that called me in a different direction. 319 I therefore strive for the national fighters to be united in a single front.

To the extent that I was unable to serve this goal, I held back and only stepped forward when I believed I could promote it.

In the stagnant peace, in the strife of the parties, I missed nothing.

It does no harm to the soldier, either, if he uses the time of enforced leisure to get to know life.

To observe, to explore, and to gather insights.

The aspiring person need not seek what others know, but rather what others do not wish to know; thus I looked around at life.

My paths have sometimes led me to places where the good-natured philistine is horrified and shudders. Oh, yet I would not wish to be without the impressions and experiences I have gained.

I laugh at the fools who go through life without knowing it.

And I love life and will not let my joyful faith in this world of God—despite everything—be taken from me. “For all His mighty works are glorious as on the first day.” (Faufl, Prologue in Heaven.) But man must find his way to man; the comrade—as on the battlefield—must learn to know and bear the comrade’s cares and hardships.

If I wish to contribute to the elimination of social contradictions and the alleviation of social hardship, I must first explore them myself.

What others write about it is not enough.

Thus I began a new period of apprenticeship.

At first, I sold books for the “Deutscher Nationalverlag,” seeking a distraction, to improve my financial situation, and to get to know the patrons and “friends in need.”

I got to know them.

The complacent and well-fed, who always had grand words and now suddenly found no time for me, and the small, humble ones, who spoke little, but would now have gladly given me the little they possessed to prove their loyalty and devotion to me! However humiliating and painful my journeys often were, the relief was not too dearly bought.

Through the intercession of the noble-minded Princess Tuise of Saxe-Altenburg, a German woman of princely bearing and the most social disposition, I then found two months of employment at the Robel railway track factory.

The founder and director of this prominent company, Kommerzienrat Langkammerer, assigned me to a work group that opened up knowledge to me in fields that had previously been foreign to me.

I learned a great deal and soon earned the prospect of a managerial position in the large company.

In particular, I took the opportunity to grasp, at the vise and the forge, the hard and heavy lot of the German industrial worker.

The improvement of this lot must be one of the foremost guiding principles of the Nationalist and National Socialist movement, if one demands of the German worker that he should know and love a fatherland called Germany.

Of course, the German worker will also have to come to the realization that his difficult lot is not the fault of the arbitrariness of German entrepreneurs, but that the peace of submission—the fruit of November 1918—and the Dawes Plan are the determining forces that drive his living conditions below an tolerable level.

And he will further have to realize that neither hatred of fellow Germans, nor riots and strikes, will improve his lot, but only the willingness to fight with the aim of shaking off the yoke of the enemy powers.

The German worker will have to come to terms with the fact that wars are not waged—and have not been waged for a long time—to satisfy the whims of princes, but to protect the rights to life of the people, above all the working masses, and to give them room to live.

The German worker cheered the 9th

November 1918.

The day on which his longing for freedom seemed to be fulfilled, but which instead only bound him in chains.

I do not dispute and understand that it served as an ideal for many.

Only the dispossessed have ideals.

But their ideal proved to be a mirage.

The proud, fighting armies at the front have been replaced by the armies of the unemployed at home.

Glory and honor have been followed by hardship and misery.

A revolution is good when it manfully fights for proud freedom, when blood and sword are at stake.

It is a crime when it seeks only to haggle for higher wages and pay.

Today, the power to turn the tide of fate lies once again primarily in the hands of the German worker.

May he recognize his mission!

No work, no bread; no struggle, no life!

During my apprenticeship at the factory, my case came before the Committee on the Feme of the German Reichstag.

As it turned out, this was the highest authority of the German people, against whose decision there is no appeal in the freest republic in the world.

I now saw again many faces familiar to me from my time in the Reichstag!

The illustrious college of elected representatives of the sovereign people had spared no effort or expense—for which the good people must pay—to rush to the scene of barbaric Bavarian atrocities.

From Munich, the “hotbed of horrific femicides,” the former stronghold of rebellion against the Weimar Constitution, the final veils were to be lifted for the astonished world, veils that had hitherto been spread over the depraved activities of those who scorned a form of government characterized by

beauty and dignity. 21 Röhm, The Story of a High Traitor 321 The poet O.

Hartwick wrote the motto: Speak the truth, bear the burden, dare to do what is right—every day!

The man must not have known New Germany.

Following his advice has led me to Stadelheim twice.

Attorney Dr.

Jur.

Paul Ledi, a non-denominational lawyer, subjected the summoned witnesses to a strict interrogation on behalf of the German people; high-ranking and top government officials allowed themselves to be questioned by him like schoolboys; they answered his questions obediently and willingly.

That Dr.

Paul Levi, attorney, M.

D.

R., non-denominational, was accused of treason without him having objected, does not bother the "objective" Germans.

How can one, eight years after the end of the war, come up with such trivial and anachronistic accusations!

In my rashness, I completely forgot that in November 1918 the Lord's Chosen People had triumphed across the board.

In criminal immaturity, I even refused to cooperate with Dr.

Levi, attorney for Nechts≠, M.

D.

R., non-denominational, to engage in a conversation.

This enraged the German people, represented by Messrs. Dr. Levi, Lanbsberg, Dr.

Bergsträßer, etc., and imposed a fine of 300 RM on me, with ten days' imprisonment in case of non-payment.

Since I did not have 300 RM, I served the sentence.

As a matter of course, I found myself that day, without any need for discussion or prior arrangement, once again at the side of my esteemed General von Epp.

Soldiers, after all, speak German even in the new Germany.

In spite of Stadelheim!

But the all-too-timid always bow to the imposed power or cannot remember.

More courage to profess one's convictions is needed!

I cannot refrain from inserting my political creed here.

I unreservedly adopt the words of warning from a great German.

Perhaps it would do no harm, however, if the "Nationalists" were to look back 115 years in their memory and extract the following sentences from Clausewitz's "Confessions," rescuing them from oblivion: "The way of recognizing public opinion distinguishes the various estates and, within the estates, the individuals.

The noble classes are the most virtuous; the court and state officials the most corrupt.

They do not merely desire, like the others, peace and order; they are not merely unaccustomed to the idea of fulfilling their duty in the face of danger, but they also pursue with implacable hatred anyone who does not despair.

For what is it other than despair when one presents our condition and a far worse one that will follow to every storm?

Whoever, therefore, does not despair of preserving the state through duty and honor, whoever does not believe that only the most unconditional and shameful submission is a duty—and that he does not bear honor—as a statesman, may be sure to be attacked by those duty-forgetful state officials, who are slandered before the public, accused before the king, and betrayed to the French envoy.

I solemnly renounce this opinion and sentiment, with which we adorn ourselves as if it sprang from a pure concern for the common good, or were one with it; I renounce: the reckless hope of salvation through the hand of chance; \ from the dull expectation of a future that a dull mind refuses to comprehend; from the foolish hope of appeasing a tyrant's wrath through voluntary submission, of winning his trust through base servility and flattery; from the resignation of an oppressed intellect;

from the unreasonable distrust of the powers God has given us; from the reckless neglect of all duties toward the common good; from the shameless sacrifice of all the honor of the state and the people, of all personal and human dignity; I believe and profess that a people has nothing to hold in higher esteem than the dignity and freedom of its existence; vi it must defend these with the last drop of blood; it has no holier duty to fulfill, no higher law to 8 n; that the stain of cowardly submission can never be erased; that this drop of poison in the blood of a people is passed down to posterity and will paralyze and undermine the strength of future generations

; that honor can be lost only once: that the honor of the king and the government is one with the honor of the people and the sole palladium of their welfare; that a people is, under most circumstances, invincible in the great and courageous struggle for its freedom; that even the loss of this freedom after a bloody and honorable struggle ensures the rebirth of the people and is the core of life from which a new

tree will one day grow with secure roots 490 I declare and affirm to the world and to posterity that I consider the false prudence that seeks to * avoid danger to be the most pernicious

that fear and anxiety can instill." "Posterity," Clausewitz concluded his reflections, "will judge and exempt from condemnation those who have courageously swum against the current of corruption." The one who wrote this, however, was neither a movie star nor a master builder; it was only Clausewitz.

Posterity has proven him right.

It will also vindicate those "who do not forget, in the frenzy of fear of our days, the warning events of ancient and modern times, the wise teachings of entire centuries, the noble examples of famous peoples."

History, of course, teaches us that its lessons are not heeded.

Thus, the German people, too, disregarding the insights of their ancestors, will likely have to drain the cup of suffering to the bitter end, until they find the path to recovery within themselves.

During my years of leisure, I twice found a hospitable welcome in the home of the upright, genuinely German-minded Dr.

Thönen in Zweisimmen 21 323 in the Swiss Alps.

Apart from him, I came to know many valiant men in German-speaking Switzerland who, in their homeland—which they love passionately—uphold German culture and remain steadfastly loyal to their brothers in the Reich.

The fellow countryman of German stock abroad trusts in the rebirth of our, his, fatherland and stands by it even in dark days.

May we, citizens of the German Reich, never forget that we must prove ourselves worthy of this trust!

Of the many loyal friends who have remained particularly close to me even after my retirement from political life, one man has stood by my side unwaveringly all these years as my most loyal comrade and advisor, to whom I owe the greatest gratitude: Captain Seydel.

If I have been able to overcome many disappointments and bitterness, I owe it above all to this truly best comrade of my life.

He was also a valuable, irreplaceable advisor to me during the writing of this book.

Hühnlein, d.

Heydebreck, Brückner, Graf du Moulin, Heines, Brosche, Schiller, and D.

Prosch remained particularly loyal comrades to me.

No less so were Baron von Thüngen and Baron von Reitzenstein.

I spent many happy days at the homes of Forest Councilor Walter in Hallein and Chamber Singer Hans Beer in Stadtsteinach.

My good comrades from my time in the field stood by me unwaveringly: in the families of my friends Seber and Dr.

Brandl, my trusted Weber, and the faithful Gößl, I spent happy hours of the warmest camaraderie and fond memories; likewise in the homes of my dear Nobert Bergmann in Altdorf and my fine, like-minded brother Hermann in Nuremberg.

A close sense of camaraderie unites me with the men who were most recently under my command as soldiers: the brave Bräunlein, Klee, Sengmüller, Meirner, Seifert, Stenzer, Rolf, and Duschl.

In addition to Brey and Kugler, Otto Frischeisen, Fritz Nägele and Gümbel, Völl and Melzl from my Munich unit of the N.

K.

F.

Herbert Suhr, Hans Niederer, and Otto Baliczaf in particular remained loyal to me.

From America, I always receive faithful greetings from my good comrade

Master Steinbacher, who is working over there for the German cause.

Following my particular affection and admiration, I was once again permitted to be a guest at Wahnfried in Bayreuth and could let the overwhelming musical creations of the most German of masters work their magic on me in perfect devotion and beauty.

No festive city in the world will ever be able to measure up to Bayreuth.

German victorious power, German will, German spirit radiate brightly from this lofty temple into the homeland and the world.

For hours, the profane world sinks into insubstantial nothingness; a world of infinite longing and blissful understanding rises in its place from the sea of sound.

The mind breaks free from the pitiful traders of everyday life and rises into the sublime sphere of heroes.

The call of the sword resounds joyfully toward Valhalla; it awakens the memory of a time when the Germanic man dared to fight the deity, and it kindles the passionate desire that one day Siegfried the German may once again take up the broken sword, forge it anew, and, storming over mountains and valleys, win the precious treasure of freedom.

Concluding Words I have opened the book of my life and experiences before the understanding friend and the nagging philistine.

The snob will consider this unwise; but that does not shake me.

Many books have been written, but few, I suppose, with such reckless boldness.

Even my political friends may not like some things; my sense of solidarity, despite all the one-sidedness of my thoughts and feelings, has compelled me to acknowledge the merits of the enemy no less than to point out the faults of the friend.

I am a friend of clear speech and have not made a pit of murder out of my heart.

Distressed, passionate, and defiant—just as it came from my soul—I had to write.

And yet it was far from my intention to offend or hurt anyone.

The soldier's tone is rough and harsh; but we soldiers all speak the same language and understand one another.

The soldiers' leader, Napoleon, once said during his exile: "Soldiers will never be able to hate me, even if they have faced me as enemies!" The wife of a soldier in my company, who is far from my political camp, recently said to me: "In my husband's heart, his captain comes first—nothing matters more to him than him; only then come his mother and I." And another, a communist, jumped up during the Soviet era at a meeting where the officers were being vilified and shouted: "I don't know if what you say about your officers is true, but one thing I know for sure: it isn't true of my captain." Thus, the soldier reaches out across all social and class distinctions and all political views.

The comradeship of soldiers, cemented by blood, may be temporarily confined; torn from the heart, it can never be destroyed. Today, all of Germany has fallen into slumber: heroic Germany sleeps.

Let my words be a wake-up call to these sleepers!

I do not address the hasty and sneaky merchant who has elevated that accursed gold to a fine god, but rather the fighter struggling in the battle of life who seeks to win freedom and, in and with it, the kingdom of heaven.

Whatever serves the cause of German freedom, I approve; whatever runs counter to it, I oppose.

Let Europe, let the whole world go up in flames; what does it matter to us?

Germany must live and be free.

Call me a philistine if you will, I cannot help it: I reject sport in its present form and effect.

Moreover, I consider it a veritable national danger.

We will not lift up the fatherland with champions and artificially bred sports stars; only a careful, gymnastic education that gives the whole population physical strength and performance capacity, and thereby mental resilience and moral support, can benefit the people as a whole.

It certainly fits right in with this age of appearances and advertising: kitsch, sensory confusion, and

sensation, with no lasting inner substance.

I leave the sports craze to Allstein and Mosse; I stick with Jahn.

The Germans have forgotten how to hate.

In place of masculine hatred, feminine lamentation has taken hold.

But those who cannot hate cannot love either.

Fanatical hatred and passionate love—from this fire springs the flame of freedom.

Lack of passion, detachment, objectivity is impersonality, is pseudo-wisdom.

Only passion brings insight, only passion brings wisdom.

Contrary to the admonition of the “prudent,” Köhl and Baron von Hünefeld, together with their Irish comrade Fitzmaurice, flew across the Great Sea from east to west and conquered the elements. “Peace and order” is the battle cry of the pensioners.

Ultimately, however, one cannot govern the state according to the needs of pensioners. “Prudence is,” wrote the *Münchner Zeitung* in 1927 on the occasion of French retreats in the occupied territory, “when one allows oneself to be slapped in the face and takes it calmly.” Translated into German, “peace and order” thus simply means a soft spot.

To hell once again with this calm and prudence, with the lukewarm, the half-hearted, the cowards! “The imprudent” fought for four and a half years at the front!

The “level-headed” stayed at home! “Newcomers” fought in Upper Silesia to preserve the Reich. “The mature ones” locked them up for it. “Irresponsible dreamers” spent eight years calling on the people to resist enslavement and oppression.

The “responsible politicians” of New Germany have run Germany into the ground in eight years.

Out of sheer “prudence” and “maturity,” our people and fatherland are slowly but surely perishing.

Germany has never been suited to “diplomacy” or “politics” since ancient times; the greatness of its history has always been determined by the sword. “I humbly beg that the diplomats be instructed not to lose again what the soldier has won with his own blood,” Blücher was already compelled to exclaim to his king, Frederick William II, after the Battle of Belle-Alliance.

Only the soldier is capable of leading the people and the fatherland from distress and disgrace to freedom and honor. 327 Appendix 1 Assessment of the Situation Completed in May 1918.

The prolonged duration of the war and the conscription of all social classes into military service have given rise to numerous phenomena that are capable of endangering the army.

We cannot ignore these signs of the times; we must take them seriously, determine their causes and effects, and determine how recognized shortcomings can be remedied and new mistakes avoided.

Today, the officer stands in a very different place than when he marched into the field in 1914, where the school of peace had fostered a close bond between officer and man and unconditional mutual trust.

Today, more than ever, the interaction between the front lines and the home front has come to the fore.

By 1914, the mood at home could never again rise to the triumphant fervor of: Oh, my dear REN e ee All too soon, the German grumblers and know-it-alls were once again allowed to hear their voices in the evening, following the success of their parable. No, the German press, which in the overwhelming majority fails to recognize its national duties, has forgotten that under the leadership of our Kaiser, for whom the world mourns, the German ball in the waters will rise, as the world has never seen before, from which the We made Germany was born, which, under the leadership of England and America, in vain 7 gr World ng 3 8 5 it's all about: care for the homeland, that the shopkeeper, the fatherland-less fellow, and the Shreiser do not gain the upper hand; the Feldbeer keeps a faithful watch.

Let us strive to ensure that here, too, everything remains as it should.

The soldier at the front does the greatest deed: he risks his life.

Every other merit must take a back seat to his; to him alone belongs the honor of arousing and maintaining joy, which is the task of all hearts.

In this regard, too little has always been done.

It must be ruled out that a man behind the front lines or at home can achieve more than at the front.

The soldier must have the assurance and always be convinced that there are honors and rewards that he can attain only as a combatant.

Internal satisfaction must be accompanied by external recognition: this consists of awards, promotions, and preferential assignments.

But much has already been said and written about awards; unfortunately, this has not changed anything in the way this matter is handled.

Everyone knows what ails us here, but no doctor has yet been found who could get to the root of the problem.

The path to a respected unit is long and leads through many channels.

Eee 8 that.

Au 1 Advisors should primarily be selected from within; in this he sees recognition for the unit's overall performance.

Lud UNE sR But he never understands that outstanding participation in a.

is not the sole prerequisite for the awards that must be reserved as the highest recognition for the fighting unit.

Thus, over time, every award has lost its value, no less for the officer than for the man.

Even today, the esteem for a war decoration diminishes with the higher rank of the recipient.

No matter how many awards we have, we lack one: the one that the officer and the soldier can earn solely through personal bravery in the face of the enemy.

The introduction of this badge of honor would make up for much of what has been neglected and lost.

In conjunction with this Front Cross or Fire Cross, whatever one may call it, every other war decoration would gain increased significance while retaining its historical form.

On the other hand, it is the nature of promotions that has caused bitterness and disappointment for many front-line soldiers.

Admittedly, it may be necessary at home and among rear-area authorities to fill special posts with higher ranks; yet it is a 7 5 when ranks are attained here that are denied to the front-line soldier.

Distinguished service in the face of the enemy must be the cornerstone of all promotions in wartime.

If the legitimate claims of these brave men are met, then consideration should also be given to the others at home, but not by treating them according to a rigid formula, but according to their individual merits. Thirdly, there are assignments that are to be regarded as equivalent to a decoration.

Here, conduct at the front should be the guiding principle for evaluation.

It must be ruled out that people who have failed at the front can be assigned to staff and General Staff positions, nor to special positions in the rear or in the home territory.

There are cases where 1 8 are sent home because of their conduct 4 and, through diligence and ambition, attain leading positions.

Instead, proven officers and enlisted men should be withdrawn from the front—even against their will; behind the front lines and in support roles, these men will render excellent service and serve as an inspiration there.

The German Army, in its current composition, is a complete army in the truest sense of the word.

The field army and the home army are an inseparable whole; they must complement each other in an alternating manner.

At home stands the army that must first be trained, that re-enlists those who have recovered, and that employs those unfit for field service in a military capacity.

All soldiers who are fit for service at the front must be assigned to the field army.

Measures to increase its numerical strength by assigning physically weak (suitable for garrison duty) or morally inferior personnel 9 B.

by drawing from prisons) have the disadvantage of damaging the internal morale and spirit of the troops.

A large proportion of men fit for military service are employed in the war economy and cannot be spared.

F A reciprocal exchange of these men between the front and the home front is, however, often possible and must be sought.

A policy of replacing individual personnel in offices, agencies, and military units behind the front lines, in the rear, and in the home army cannot be accepted. 329 330 The responsibility for removing men from the front lines lies fully with the senior administrative offices and the military units that recognize their indispensability.

This lever must be applied again and again; for these are matters that particularly offend the front-line soldiers.

The attempt in recent years to maintain a select force through general conscription has failed.

Those who had barely recovered from their wounds, those who volunteered, or those who were too proud to list their ailments were ruthlessly sent to the field; the shirkers, who always knew how to prevent their deployment to the field, found ways and means here as well to get out of it.

Officers suspected of evading or obstructing their deployment to the front must be dealt with in a manner befitting their rank.

Their dismissal must take place as soon as possible and without hesitation.

It is unacceptable to retain these officers in peacetime simply because they render particularly fruitful service to the national army.

Even officers on leave must be discharged without it being necessary to completely forego their services.

Jebermann can be replaced; there are enough proven men in the field who can be deployed in the homeland on a case-by-case basis.

Training must be adapted to the People’s Army.

We need soldiers who are fit for war and eager to fight.

To this end, the army requires suitable training personnel.

Officers who have been serving at home since the beginning of the war are no longer fit to be instructors and must be ruthlessly removed.

The point now is not to preach about experience and wisdom, but to make use of experience and create something living. And there, I believe, are young men who have distinguished themselves in the field,

who are more suited to the front than the paper-pushers of the home army, who prefer the hardships of home to the cheerful life at the front.

In peacetime, we had far too few active non-commissioned officers, and they are sorely missed now.

Instructors must have proven their worth in the face of the enemy; in my opinion, they are not fit for duty and cannot command respect.

The training itself must be strict.

Uncompromising discipline is the first and only foundation of any success.

The treatment of the men must be impeccable.

Decent treatment, no abuse of authority, care, and compassion for subordinates ensure the superior's authority.

Experience has shown that those who mistreat soldiers are invariably people who have never been able to share the soldiers' joys and sorrows in the trenches.

Especially in public, the subordinate's military salute—which must be strictly demanded—must always be met with a respectful return.

A deliberately omitted or poor salute deserves just as severe a punishment as a deficient response.

A soldier's neat uniform on the street enhances his public standing.

The tendency of some people to make themselves look as old as possible (bushy beard, old-fashioned glasses, walking stick, etc.) must also be strongly discouraged.

Even older soldiers must make a fresh impression.

The officer must be a role model for the soldier.

The men demand of him the selfless and fearless commitment of his entire personality, care for their welfare and misfortune, and compassion even for their personal affairs.

The man on the ground would rather serve under an officer who practices strict discipline than under a soft-hearted superior.

The officer sets the standard for the unit's performance.

A good officer leads his troops forward in every endeavor.

The man also judges his officer by his off-duty conduct—exemplary behavior in public, in dealing with women, and in life—which is today more necessary than ever, as the dismissal of Russian officers in some parts of the army has awakened similar ideas.

This necessitates a careful selection of officer candidates.

Active-duty and reserve officers are now so intertwined that equally strict standards must be applied to the selection of reserve officers. £ If the controversial question has ever arisen as to whether the active-duty officer or the reserve officer has performed better, this question has certainly not been raised at the front.

It is clear that the active-duty officer performs better in training and leadership due to his peacetime training; in battle, it comes down to personality, and this is independent of rank and service status.

Here, the sole criterion is the judgment of the soldier, who learns to appreciate his officer in combat, at rest, and during training.

Only a man who can be expected to fully fulfill his duties as an officer may become an officer.

Otherwise, he serves the troops better as a non-commissioned officer (officer's deputy). = The tradition of the officer corps must be fully upheld even in wartime.

In addition to the careful selection and training of officer candidates, the education of the young officer corps must be conducted at every possible opportunity (dinner parties, social gatherings); corps spirit must be cultivated, and social and comradely education must be strengthened and improved.

Treatment that is strict but fair on duty, and comradely off duty, will establish and deepen the young officer's trust in his superiors and senior comrades.

For the officer himself, proving himself in the face of the enemy should be decisive, not his length of service. This applies to commanders and leaders of small units just as much as to generals and general staff officers.

H Even officers must have served at the front. }, The promotion of officers should not be narrowly tied to the peacetime budget.

K A conscientious civil servant must not be allowed to regulate promotion conditions from a managerial position based on carefully drawn-up tables, E, etc.

; instead, a proven man of the front must be in charge, who, with fresh vigor and energy, takes responsibility and commits himself to the cause.

The fact that officers, regardless of whether they are constantly facing the enemy or serving the fatherland in the rear, are promoted at the same time is an absurdity; this point of view is also contradicted by the new regulations governing the ranks of the reserve, which substitute the criterion of prior training for that of proven service.

G The promotion of front-line officers must be regulated uniformly: at present, only those front-line officers have been promoted whose commanders have taken the initiative; other commanders apply different standards; this puts these officers at a disadvantage. \ & General promotion is absolutely inadequate, particularly the promotion from captain to major.

If a captain has led a battalion continuously for years, it would be only fair to finally grant him the corresponding rank. 5 In this case, the system must also make a sacrifice.

The marshal’s baton, which the soldier supposedly carries in his knapsack, should not be buried too deeply, even in a figurative sense. 331 As mentioned, only officers who have proven themselves on the front lines may be appointed to preferred positions.

The need for infantry officers at the front must not lead to the infantry—which is, after all, represented in small higher staffs as a reserve—being virtually excluded from service in higher staffs, barring exceptional circumstances.

At home, a thorough purge must be carried out among the permanent home-front fighters.

Either to the front—not to the rear, which is even worse than the garrison—or out; this alternative must be presented to everyone.

Also the posts of governors, commanders, deputy

commanders, and commanders of prisoner-of-war camps, railway stations, etc., will be filled with Easterners who have lost their full fitness for field service or who temporarily lack it.

If there are frequent changes here, the situation will hardly suffer as a result.

The 8 in the rear echelon may only be made available temporarily to officers in need of rest, and here, too, thorough inspections by front-line commissions cannot be carried out often enough. Even among the higher-ranking officers there are some who had to leave their command posts in disgrace; they will be grateful if a new field of activity is opened up for them.

The field second lieutenants are not exactly a fortunate creation.

It is certainly gratifying that veteran non-commissioned officers are given the opportunity to attain a more suitable position; however, the position has suffered as a result of commissioned officer candidates on leave of absence—who were not deemed fully qualified to become officers—being promoted to this rank.

By improving the pay of acting officers and raising the status of this position, the perception of it as a hybrid role might perhaps be dispelled.

The veterinary officers and military officials have fully proven their worth in this war.

The medical officers in peacetime were generally correctly assessed as soldiers but underestimated as doctors.

The hardship caused by the appointment of deputy civil servants in their home regions has been partially alleviated by the creation of similar positions in the 5th.

For non-commissioned officers and enlisted men, what has been said about officers applies mutatis mutandis. 5 - Rn: 5 Here, too, capable men from the front must be given the opportunity for rapid advancement.

The deep disappointment of many good men, who upon returning to their combat units after being

wounded found as their superiors men who had always remained at home, has not yet been fully overcome.

Improving the status of active non-commissioned officers after the peace treaty is an undeniable necessity.

Then we will have a cadre of capable men who can successfully contribute to the education of the people.

However, proper training and education are still often undervalued. In particular, it must be the concern of every officer to elevate the standing of non-commissioned officers in relation to the enlisted men in every respect and at every opportunity, and to strengthen their authority.

By demanding stricter proof of merit from the enlisted men before the non-commissioned officers, avoiding reprimands and humiliations in front of the enlisted men, and fostering a sense of camaraderie within the non-commissioned officers' corps, the disciplinary officer secures a level of support that cannot be overestimated.

The soldier, too, must be convinced that brave conduct in the face of the enemy, in addition to decorations and preferential assignments, opens up opportunities for advancement. Just as strictly as with officers, the combat readiness of non-commissioned officers and the troops of the rear echelon and the home army must be repeatedly tested.

must be tested.

Clerks, 9 lads, cooks, etc.

are never irreplaceable.

Special attention must be paid to them, especially in J.

But there is no need to say too much about the achievements of the individual units.

They have all done their part. 20 The praise of the infantry, which is so often sung, must also have practical consequences.

X = The infantry must be fully recognized as the first branch even after the war.

This can only be achieved through external identification.

Buttons, insignia, the tuft, and all those things that were considered honors before the war must also be retained unchanged after the war.

Under exceptional circumstances, it is permissible to deviate from time-honored tradition.

If railway and telegraph troops, etc.

wear guard braids for formal reasons, it is incomprehensible that the infantry, which fought in this war, should be denied an external insignia. 3 do not consider these to be trivial matters, and this is the

correct standpoint.

In the old military traditions: parades, parade marches, roll call—

The soldier's spirit lives on and on.

If a unit was praised in the daily report during this war for particular bravery, the regiment's history will forever tell of it.

Love of country and loyalty to king and emperor are deeply rooted in our people; the aforementioned honors help to forge a closer and more personal bond between sovereign and army.

Honor to whom honor is due!

The front-line soldier—both the officer and the enlisted man—wishes to enjoy everywhere the respect to which he is entitled for his fine performance in the face of the enemy.

He must find it in all frontline units, staffs, and command authorities, and he can expect it when he serves in the rear and from the rear echelons, railway personnel, and local authorities. = The treatment of the wounded requires special attention, and if the army, alongside its brilliant military achievements on the battlefields, continually renews itself in its internal structure and eliminates the weak links, it will be supported by the trust of the entire people across all its strata, both now and in the future.

Then the people, too, can overcome the lingering shadow of the patriots and the faint-hearted from 1865.

The women who curse God and the devil in their struggle for daily bread have already proven themselves in times of peace; the journeymen who have not yet lost their fondness for foreign lands; the ladies who give themselves to the prisonersand desecrate the revered name—the naysayers and the know-it-alls—all of them the German people will be able to endure, united in the same firm confidence in the invincible army, which the strong German sword embodies.

The gleaming defense ensures peace for the German fatherland, a peace worth the heavy sacrifices of property and blood.

Appendix 2 Memorandum on the Front Ban of November 7, 1924, submitted to the investigating judge The German people are still at war; the Treaty of Versailles has not even temporarily brought it to an end.

Only the circumstances have changed, although the question remains whether the methods employed by the enemy in the current phase of the war do not threaten the very existence of the people more than the methods used during the war years of 1914–1918!

Alongside this state of war, which has persisted since 1914, a state of revolution has been unfolding in Germany, beginning around the middle of 1917, which found visible expression in the November 1918 and subsequent months in the Goldaten riots and red uprisings and reached its apparent conclusion.

Nor was the revolution either suspended or even ended by the enactment of the Weimar Constitution.

The development continues.

War and revolution have, after all, kept Germany in suspense for about a decade now; the German people have been deeply shaken to their very core by the hardships of the war and the post-war period; final calm will only come when war and revolution are brought to a close through a peace and a legal order that does justice to the national and social aspirations of the people.

In such times, the people themselves have always taken an active part in the attainment of freedom throughout history.

For the government of a country under enemy pressure cannot—even with the will to do so—exhaust all the means available to the state that lead to the attainment and restoration of freedom.

At all times, brave and freedom-loving men have taken it upon themselves to endure oppression and persecution in their struggle for their people and their homeland.

But through their oppression and suffering, they have always paved the way for freedom and laid the foundations for renewal.

Only later history has bestowed upon their will and striving the crown of merit.

It may remain undiscussed whether the means of state power granted to the German Empire by the enemy alliance are sufficient to counter internal subversive activities.

There can be no doubt, however, that these means of power are insufficient for a confrontation with the external enemy.

Precisely when we see how France is militarizing its people, we must strive for the same if we do not wish to abandon the last remnant of hope for freedom.

This fact of state powerlessness has led—as has always been the case with such powerlessness—to the formation of associations and organizations alongside the state's military forces, whose aim is to supplement the state's armed forces in the struggle against external threats.

The state, of course, will usually be unable to approve or support such institutions.

Nevertheless, the test and prerequisite for the existence of an association will always be whether it prepares its members for external combat and makes them available.

Viewed from this perspective, one must surely grant all patriotic defense associations the right to exist.

This right must be denied to the Reichsbanner Schwarzrotgold, as long as it has inscribed the slogan "Never again war" on its flag and thereby forfeited its right to exist.

A As for the statement on the internal renewal of the organization, the demand is generally made of the associations that they must be "un.

politically neutral."

This requirement is seemingly correct insofar as, by nature, a party-political stance and involvement in the day-to-day issues of party politics run counter to the tasks of a defense association.

However, experience shows that it is often precisely those associations that emphasize their apolitical stance the loudest that, consciously or unconsciously, serve party purposes.

That the Neihsbanner is an instrument of the so-called republican parties for the fulfillment of certain demands of these parties is not disputed by the parties themselves.

But a number of the so-called national associations are also bound to party politics through their leaders or the influence of their patrons or financial backers.

One need only refer, for example, to the “Stahlhelm” in the Reich or to the “Bayern und Reich” association in Bavaria.

The “Frontbund,” on the other hand, rejects party-political ties in a broad sense.

Instead, it demands of its followers a commitment to the worldview from which it alone promises the liberation of the fatherland.

The “National Socialist Freedom Party” has absolutely nothing to do with the Frontbann as such.

The Front is strictly separated from the party-political wing of the National Socialist movement (see the Official Regulations); it prohibits military leaders from simultaneously serving as political leaders, nor does it even require its members to belong to the political party.

A word should be said here about the National Socialist worldview: The National Socialist movement was born on the battlefields of the World War.

The war, with its terrible and beautiful experiences, gave birth to the new man, the front-line soldier.

All that divided the individual classes and strata of the people has been swept aside by the constant threat of death.

The war gave birth to the spirit of unity, of solidarity in hardship and death, of comradeship, of loyalty, of love and devotion to country and fatherland that would make any sacrifice, of courage and faith; but it also carved the seeds of self-interest, disloyalty, lack of patriotism, and cowardice into the heart of the front-line soldier.

This new man, the front-line soldier, has ridden across the threshold of the revolution into the New Germany.

On the shards and ruins of the old Germany, which collapsed through war and revolution, he intends to help build the Young Germany in the spirit of the front, which protected Germany for four years against enemy invasion.

Guided by this spirit of the front, Adolf Hitler has given us Germans the freedom movement, and none other than General Ludendorff, who, like no other, was able to judge in war what the spirit of the front is capable of, has stood by his side.

The front-line soldier knows that victory can only be won through bitter, self-sacrificing struggle; he knows that a people can only regain the freedom they have lost through struggle.

We will not dream, talk, or negotiate our way back to the freedom we lost through our own fault; we must be prepared for every sacrifice of property and blood, steel ourselves for battle, and fight—then we will triumph and be free.

That is the profound meaning of the freedom movement of Young Germany, the Front movement, the National Socialist movement of Adolf Hitler.

The scum who today, in their 335 Frontbanns, give this great movement reason to believe that it pursues the aim of "undermining the established form of government of the Reich and the states."

If any movement or direction operating on national soil has taken a clear stance on the question of the republican form of government, it is surely the National Socialist movement, which has defined its position on this matter.

The National Socialist movement does not even claim to seek a change in the republican form of government by legally permissible means; it has always and everywhere clearly stated through the mouths of its leaders that the question of the form of government remains irrelevant to it, The discussion of whether a monarchy or a republic is preferable is, even for supporters of the monarchy—to whom I emphatically count myself—only relevant at a point in time when the German people have regained their right to self-determination, i.

e.g.,

after the abolition of the Treaty of Versailles.

With a view to bringing about changes to the legal institutions of the Republic, such as the office of the Reich President, the People's Representative Assembly, etc. The National Socialist movement has, even outwardly and clearly recognizable since November 9, 1923, embarked on a new course by sending its representatives to the people's assemblies; here it has tasked its deputies with gradually bringing about the improvements it deems necessary, using the means now legally at its disposal.

Before this forum, the question of dictatorship, which has been raised time and again, will likely also be addressed.

Should extraordinary circumstances in the course of historical development

should these extraordinary circumstances necessitate such extraordinary measures, then naturally the hope of our friends is for a dictatorship.

It is not possible to establish fixed guidelines for the forms of dictatorship; they will have to adapt to the respective situation.

Nevertheless, the current dictatorship of the Bavarian People's Party in the Free State of Bavaria can in some respects serve as a model and example.

Any discussions or considerations regarding the form of government and state institutions—especially from irresponsible quarters—can therefore hardly be taken as grounds for suspicion of undermining the lawful form of government.

If it is to be assumed that this statement was made to the Frontbann at all, it is doubly disconcerting that the impetus for this came from the Bavarian government.

After all, the Bavarian Minister-President takes the position that fostering the idea of the monarchy is one of the tasks of Bavarian politics, which strives to strengthen the Bavarian concept of the state.

It cannot be denied, however, that the promotion of the idea of the king aims to undermine the constitutional republican form of government.

If the Bavarian Minister-President's speech in Tuntendausen or the statements of his mouthpiece, the "Regensburger Anzeiger," do not provide sufficient evidence, one need only refer to the activities of the "Heimat- und Königbund" (Homeland and King's League), which operates under the protection and tolerance of the Bavarian state government, to find the missing grounds.

When this League, in the well-known Kolbermoor resolution, demands of the Bavarian officer corps "that it recognize only one head, namely the Supreme Commander," and when, in short, of all officer associations with the exception of the D.

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the oath of allegiance is established as binding for all officers in the Bavarian army, it is more than incomprehensible that a Bavarian government, which knows, promotes, and supports all these endeavors, would refer an association, which, precisely because of its negative stance toward the so-called "kingmakers," has drawn the hatred of these circles, is being prosecuted for undermining the republican state form.

The key likely lies in the fact that initially, violations of the General State Commissioner's ordinance regarding the continuation of prohibited associations were assumed; an accusation that, however, could no longer be sustained within the first 48 hours.

I must here refer to the communications I received on the 18th, 19th,

and 20

September, in connection with my representations regarding the arrest of my friends in Munich.

Both Minister of State Stützel and Public Prosecutor Full assured me that my friends had been taken into custody for maintaining prohibited associations.

Mr. Meyding had also been arrested "by mistake" at that time, but he was released immediately after a high-ranking government official intervened.

Mr. Meyding had, in fact, placed himself at the "state's" disposal through the Oberland League, which

had been dissolved by the General Staff.

That was likely also the reason why, on September 19,

the proceedings against my friends for continuing the associations were dropped, and instead proceedings under the Republic Protection Act were initiated and immediately referred to the State Court.

I present the information I received on September 19

from the public prosecutor: “This is not about you and the Frontbann, but your friends are in custody because they continued to operate the banned associations,” and the information provided to me on September 20

from Investigating Judge Weißenberger, that the proceedings are directed against the Frombann, and that the older members have already been sent to the State Court in Leipzig.

It is therefore obvious to me that the arrests were carried out first and foremost as a precautionary measure to create the desired pretext for delaying the release of Hitler and his two friends.

Only after reviewing the confiscated material would a decision be made as to what course of action to take.

To my knowledge, the immediate trigger for the arrests was the following sequence of events: A young man, who had been tasked with delivering an order from the Frontbann, carried it to the deputy Erbard Auer.

He went immediately with the order to the State Ministry of the Interior.

Based on this report, the house searches, seizures, and arrests took place the next morning on the orders of the State Minister of the Interior.

I cannot recall the discussions I had on September 18

on the 28th of 185 with Straßer and Government Councilor Eichner, and on September 19

without witnesses with the Bavarian Minister of the Interior; they revolved primarily around the fact that I expressed my surprise and indignation regarding the actions of the Bavarian authorities, referring to my lectures, which I gave on July 29

and on 18

to the Minister.

At these meetings, based on an appeal to be made public, I had explained the A.

Frontbann in detail.

In particular, I tried to dispel the concerns that a party-political force was to be created.

I demanded only that my association be granted the same rights as, for example, the “Bund Bayern und Reich” or the “Reichsbanner.”

The outcome of these discussions was, in my view, unsatisfactory, though not surprising, as I was unable to secure a clear position from the minister.

However, there was never any talk of a ban.

I therefore attached no significance to the brief conversation with Ministerialrat Zellmaier, because I was familiar with this official’s political stance—particularly toward our movement—from earlier consultations.

It was immediately clear to me that he was alien to my line of thought and opposed to it.

But even on his part, in response to my specific question as to whether the Z Rö m, The Story of a High Traitor 337, the time of ferment and formation still to come, cannot diminish their ideal value; nor will they be able to hinder the ultimate certain victory of true National Socialism.

The statement from the State Court merely stated “that with regard to the 336 Frontbann, only the response was given that action would be taken against the association if it were to commit any illegal acts.”

In any case, both based on the discussions held and on the correspondence, which is likely on file, there was no reason for me to refrain from founding the Frontbann.

What gave particular cause for concern was the assumption that the Frontbann constituted a continuation of prohibited associations.

F This assumption would be justified if the Frontbann 1.

From the associations banned in parts of the Reich: see

A., Oberland, and Neuhstriegsflagge, and had assumed the assets or liabilities of these organizations.

Neither of these is the case: The Frontbann is an organization that extends across the entire

And German Austria, i.e., over areas in which these associations were, in part, never present at all.

It is clear and quite.

That the Frontbann includes former members of the banned associations in the states where these were banned, 3.

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associations in the countries where no ban existed.

The leader of the “Schützen- und Wanderbund,” which included some members of the former “Oberland,” however, explicitly requested not only the admission of the old Oberland associations in the states where no ban had been imposed, but also of the local groups of the “Schützen- und Wanderbund” rejected this, because as leader of the Frontbann, I did not permit the continued existence of the previous associations, which had been banned in some states.

My decision was based, on the one hand, on my desire to avoid from the outset all the difficulties associated with maintaining prohibited units, and, on the other hand, on my awareness of the weaknesses that the disbanded units had in the first place.

That I raised no objection to the fact that, for reasons of tradition, the old units were retained, is clear to every soldier. I am today and will remain a “ten” for the rest of my life, since I am of the same

Baper. 10th

King’s Infantry Regiment, even though it was disbanded in 1919.

And likewise, anyone who once belonged to the Freikorps or the “Oberland” League remains an “Oberländer,” whether the organization is still banned or no longer exists.

Nor is it surprising, given the fact that relatively few officers can make themselves available to a defense movement for economic or political reasons, that leading figures of banned organizations still have a circle of friends from the dissolved organizations around them and have once again assumed leading positions in the Frontbann. = The weaknesses of the associations lay mainly in the area of military training.

I began by assuming that, in my view, the very essence of an organization lies in whether or not it prepares its members for combat against an external enemy. * The military training currently lacking for the German people due to the peace treaty must be provided by the organizations.

Those who have not yet received any military training at all must be trained as soldiers; former soldiers who have largely lost their military spirit due to the revolution must be brought back to military discipline and order.

Since my return from the field, I have been working continuously toward this goal, particularly in my capacity as Chief of Staff to General von Epp and in Military District Command VII.

Through my voluntary and non-official activities, I am also familiar with the origins, development, and current state of nearly all so-called patriotic associations in Bavaria.

In the Bavarian Home Guard, the Orgesch, and the “Bavaria and Reich” League, I was personally involved in their founding and development at the behest of my superiors.

I have always found that club-like behavior ultimately reduced the military value of the organizations to a minimum.

In many cases, this was compounded by a veritable frivolous handling of the resources entrusted to them.

Since I have worked exclusively in this field for years, I know this matter perhaps better than anyone else in the Reich.

In my official capacity, I acted contrary to the law and applicable regulations for four years, as ordered by my superiors.

Should this fact be called into question, I would have to insist on a sworn examination of my former superiors.

The question may arise as to what this activity has to do with the matter at hand.

The answer lies in the fact that the Frontbann is the practical and necessary result of this, my work.

Without my work as a General Staff officer, without my experience in these areas of my responsibility, the founding and nature of the Frontbann's organization cannot be understood.

Built upon these many years of comprehensive experience, the organization of the Frontbann was to be carried out in such a way that it would become the best military organization.

This may be prohibited under the Basic Law—which, according to the Treaty of Versailles, is the supreme law in Germany—and punishable under it; I have never come to terms with this legal reality and never will.

I therefore deliberately built up the association strictly along military lines from the very beginning.

For me, it could only be a matter of evading the enemy's pursuit.

Against the enemy, any means is permitted.

However, every publication, etc., that was accessible to spies and traitors residing in the country had to be examined to determine whether it could provide the Entente with grounds for accusations and blackmail. "The official regulations, etc.

therefore usually bore the note: 'Not to be disclosed.' On the other hand, I have from the outset taken the position that I have absolutely nothing to hide from the government.

I have always considered putting on a double face toward them, merely to keep up appearances, to be a petty game.

It goes without saying

That when I establish an organization, it is to be a military unit and not a singing club.

It calls it that and also expects it to be so.

The Reich government had counted on the military character and value of the associations in Upper

Silesia and the Ruhr region—the negotiations and agreements between Reich Chancellor Cuno and other Reich officials and First Lieutenant Rossbach, for example, are still available to me — likewise, in September 1923, the Bavarian government assigned Organization C as a military formation for border protection.

So why play a double game here?

Where exactly do the boundaries lie here?

I have therefore deliberately chosen to dispense with all the trappings of an association.

First and foremost, so that the members of the defense association come to realize that they are here only as soldiers and not as party or association politicians.

Precisely through this, the strict separation between the political and the military movements should become clear to every member of the military association.

But also so that our young people can once again embrace a soldierly spirit, and so that military discipline and order become second nature to them.

That is why I have—despite the objections of my friends—refrained from any compromise in this regard.

Military service titles have been chosen, service regulations have been issued, and the training process has been organized according to military standards.

I believe that military training is of the utmost importance, but also so difficult that our conscripted recruits must be pre-trained within the unit in such a way that they do not have to unlearn anything in the troops and need only learn what is reserved exclusively for the troops.

Training with weapons must be reserved for the active troops.

In the unit, nothing truly good can be taught in this regard, so it is best to refrain from it altogether.

Half-measures and gimmicks do more harm than good.

I have therefore attached no value whatsoever to the possession of water.

I am of the opinion that, in the long run, proper maintenance is completely impossible within the units.

I have not been entirely in agreement with all my friends on this point either.

However, I cannot depart from my view that, for the associations, the possession of watercraft is often merely a matter of prestige or a sport.

What was good and right three or four years ago is no longer so today.

Ultimately, what matters is that the weapons fire in an emergency.

And I believe that if the proper and careful maintenance—which is only possible with active-duty troops—is lacking,

I also believe that in cases where we need weapons, we will obtain them from somewhere.

And that is why, in the training and instruction regulations—some of which have already been issued and some of which are still being drafted—I have reserved only training without water for the unit.

I can imagine that a German authority, under the enemy's gaze, must grit its teeth and take action against anti-state activities; that it would decide to do so of its own accord, without enemy coercion, is probably unthinkable.

When I received the State Minister's latest letter, I was fully aware that action against the Frontband was imminent; I have, as it were, taken a local measure.

Nevertheless, during my last visit to Munich, I instructed the chief of staff, Lieutenant Oswald, not to remove anything, since the Frontbann did not wish to conceal anything.

Although I had no knowledge of Lieutenant Oswald's private correspondence—which, I must say, was not exactly fortunate—I must nevertheless emphasize that private letters can never be regarded as official and thus as binding documents.

I must also object to the use of portions of private letters seized by the court in official discussions in the Ministry of the Interior.

The Minister of the Interior, Stützel, in response to my objection as to why no action was being taken against the Reichsbanner—which would likewise not be acceptable given the current Bavarian stance—gave me an answer during the conversation in the presence of Rep.

Straßer, a response which I shall refrain from repeating.

It has, however, taught me that a world separates us nationalists from such an attitude.

It is our weakness that we speak openly and bluntly about what we want and dispense with diplomatic niceties in this matter; but it is also always our strength and, of that I am certain, will bring us the final victory.

Whether the State Court, for the protection of the Republic, will decide to bring charges against the Frontbann on the basis of the foregoing statements, the hearings to date, or the seized case files, I do not know.

But if the maxim "Fiat justitia, pereat mundus!"—which the prosecutor in the Hitler trial has adopted as his own—is to be applied here, then both the defendant and the plaintiff must be given the opportunity to defend their interests.

Let us not speak again of the fact that German men, who without exception risked their property and lives for the good of the fatherland in the most difficult times of dire need, who sacrificed everything for the fatherland, are to remain silent before the court "for the sake of the fatherland."

The Thormann-Grandel trial, the major and minor Hitler trials, and finally the trial against the Consul Organization have imposed silence on the men who had to defend their honor before the court in matters that would have been to the detriment of the Reich.

Yet these men have always paid for their fervent love of the fatherland—which in such situations silenced their voices against their own interests—with their freedom.

If things continue this way, Germany will soon be in dire need of upright German men.

The martyrs of our movement, like Schlageter, have fallen victim to French bullets; they are the ones who, in the vast majority, have languished or are still languishing in French dungeons for their struggle for Germany's freedom on the Rhine and Ruhr; must German prisons also always be filled with them?

Scoundrels and traitors to the fatherland roam freely at the behest of the 1; the best Germans, who devote their entire lives solely to the fatherland and the people, spend their days behind prison walls!

This must be stopped!

Well then, the fatherland demands every sacrifice from us, and we will give it!

But the Empire, too, must put the interests of the Fatherland above all else! If the Empire and its organs destroy faith in justice, then it destroys the Fatherland.

If truly only the dead are to receive justice and recognition, then the accused must also have the unrestricted right to a defense.

Then there can be no question of him concealing the essential facts.

It is not the defendant, but the plaintiff who will then have to take responsibility before the German people if matters come to light that are not conducive to the interests of the fatherland: Videant consules, ne quid detrimenti capiat res publica!

Note: For the reasons already stated earlier, I have deleted or partially amended some sentences of the memorandum.